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December 23, 2003

To: Chief Executive Officers, Acute Care Public Hospitals
Chief Executive Officers, Acute Care Private Hospitals

From: Allison J. Stuart, Director
Emergency Management Unit

Re: **Report of the Infection Control Standards Task Force**

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (ministry) struck the Infection Control Standards Task Force to recommend provincial baseline infection control and surveillance standards for febrile respiratory illnesses in acute care hospitals during non-outbreak conditions. The Task Force was co-chaired by Drs. James R. MacLean, President and Chief Executive Officer of Markham Stouffville Hospital, and Robin C. Williams, Medical Officer of Health for the Region of Niagara and Clinical Professor, Paediatrics in the Department of Paediatrics, McMaster University. The membership of the Task Force was diverse to reflect the diversity within the health care delivery system.

The Task Force's final report, *Preventing Respiratory Illness, Protecting Patients and Staff* recommends baseline standards that build on Health Canada's *Infection Control Precautions for Respiratory Infections Transmitted by Large Droplet and Contact* (non-outbreak) and supports a pan-Canada approach to infection control. The full Task Force report can be found on the ministry website (<http://www.health.gov.on.ca>).

The Report is being provided for your information and action. It will be the foundation document for standards that will be released by the Ministry in early January for infection prevention and control, and surveillance standards for febrile respiratory illnesses in acute care hospitals during non-outbreak conditions. You are encouraged to start the review of your current practices against the recommendations in the Report and make changes as necessary.

This Report and its recommendations will be modified for other sectors of the health care delivery system as required to provide direction on infection prevention and control and surveillance standards. This will include non-acute care facilities and community-based practices. This work will start in January, 2004.

On January 9, 2004 there will be a webcast regarding the recommended standards for hospital-based infection control and occupational health services and practitioners. Please see the attached memo for further details.

Please contact your regional office should you have any questions.

Happy holidays and best wishes for the new year.

C: Community-based and non-acute facilities' service providers

