

Human Rights Triage Protocol Coalition

Release of Human Rights Informed Triage Protocol Recommendations

Throughout the pandemic, advocacy groups have been calling for the development of a transparent, human rights compliant triage protocol to guide health care providers on making decisions should health care resources become overloaded due to COVID-19. This protocol would guide how decisions are made about who and how people will be treated if there are not enough health care resources to treat everyone who needs it.

We were consistently told that we did not need such a document, however the devastating third wave overwhelmed Manitoba's health care system and only the ability to move critically ill people to ICUs in other Provinces saved Manitoba doctors from having to ration critical health care for COVID patients.

While the Province created a very broad [Ethical Framework](#) early in the pandemic, that very document urged leadership to create specific guidance and a critical care triage protocol. We received confirmation that this guidance had [not been developed as of May, 2021](#) and we have received no response to our urging that a protocol that protects vulnerable Manitobans is developed.

Barrier-Free Manitoba has twice, during the pandemic, sent [requests to the Minister of Health](#) asking for the development of Triage Protocols. There was little to no response to these letters and as Manitoba was sending people out of province to be treated for COVID during the third wave, other voices have joined in, and the press became involved, but still no movement on the issue.

This effort led to the formation of the [Human Rights Triage Protocol Coalition](#) that has initiated the creation of more detailed recommendations for Triage Protocols, based on the reality that this is a Human Rights issue. The group's expertise is primarily in the area of ableism and ageism, therefore the documents have been crafted from that lens, but we are more than open to other marginalized groups lending their own lens to the documents, if they choose to distribute them.

What can you do?

1. Review the Coalition's recommendations.
 - a. [One Page Summary](#)
 - b. [Full Statement and Recommendations](#)
2. Join the [Call to Action](#) by endorsing this document.
3. Please contact your Member of the Legislature and urge immediate action to develop these triage protocols. (We understand that a personal email is more effective than one that is copied and pasted – and a personal phone call is most memorable.) You can find out who your MLA is and how to contact them here: <https://www.electionsmanitoba.ca/en/voting/MyVotingInfo>
4. Please forward this information through your social media so that there is increased awareness. Consider using #HopelsNotAPlan as a hashtag on all posts. A website with all materials and information has been set up at www.hrtpc.ca to assist you in sharing.

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Why should you care?

While the disability community has been a loud voice on this issue, this is a concern for all vulnerable populations. When healthcare is overwhelmed, marginalized people are at greater risk to be discriminated against. The Premier and Public Health have been warning us that the health care system is at risk of being overwhelmed for months and we saw a devastating demonstration of how this can happen during the third wave. As numbers once again creep upwards across the country, it would be irresponsible for the Province not to have a plan in place to guide health care professionals in making these challenging decisions. This cannot be left to doctors and nurses alone.