

**PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL**

DATE: May 3, 2023  
NAME: David Dickson  
Email: David.dickson@dkdata.com

Dear David,

Thank you for contacting our Patient Relations Department with your concern regarding the masking policy. We appreciate your feedback and apologize that Alberta Health Services (AHS) did not meet your expectations. AHS takes all concerns very seriously and the feedback is valuable in our efforts to provide high quality care.

*This patient's concern was re-reviewed by Dr. [Redacted], Facility Medical Director - University of Alberta Hospital/Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute/Kaye Edmonton Clinic, Ms. [Redacted], Patient Care Manager, Outpatient Clinic – Kaye Edmonton Clinic, and Dr. [Redacted], Site Lead, Outpatient Clinics – Kaye Edmonton Clinic. The concerns brought forward regarding Mr. Dickson's hospital experience are addressed below.*

**1. Why did the response state, “when a patient chooses not to wear a mask” and asks why him having a medical exemption continues to be missed?**

*As a result of his feedback, Dr. [Redacted] will respond to similar future situations differently for patients with a mask exemption. The Kaye Edmonton Clinic (KEC) no longer has screeners and does have accommodations that can safe-guard Mr. Dickson, other patients, and staff – including the ability to room individuals directly and away from other patients – that Dr. [Redacted] will use. He will no longer require a mask exemption letter to use these resources.*

**2. As per the response, “Patients are not granted access through the KEC with an exemption letter written by anyone who is not the physician they have an appointment with” complainant states he has many hospital visits, as per this response he would need an exemption letter from every physician he has an appointment with, stating this is ridiculous and at worst illegal and one would end up with a stack of exemption letters.**

*Unfortunately, the masking policy exemption letter requirement was misinterpreted and for that we apologize. As stated above, there are no longer screeners at the KEC and Dr. [Redacted] office will no longer require a mask exemption letter.*

**3. Complainant asks why the physicians are not being truthful in their response and ignorant of the CMOH order at the time?**

*Dr. [Redacted] apologizes for any lack of candor. Alberta Health Services policies do provide room for physicians to choose between different ways of providing medical care – including virtual delivery of care – depending on assessment of needs and urgency. From 2019-2022, Dr. [Redacted] division has provided a substantial proportion of its outpatient care virtually, including many of the assessments referred to urgent access clinics. It was the main and default way of providing care during COVID-19. The division would often start with a virtual visit to perform the assessment of needs and urgency, and then determine whether an in-person visit was required. This is why Dr. [Redacted] defaulted to a virtual visit. He understands that this process breaks down if patient referrals are accepted by a different physician, and then scheduled as an in-person visit, as happened in Mr. Dickson's case. We are sorry that this led to a delay in medical assessment, and will, in the future, use available resources to accommodate individuals who cannot wear a mask.*

**4. Complainant asks why there was a clear failing of communication at the KEC when he presented for his appointment?**

*We acknowledge that the mask policy has been challenging for patients and providers. There have been changes as more experience and understanding of COVID-19 has taken place, and transmission levels have reduced. Ensuring health care providers at the KEC are aware of changing requirements has been an ongoing process, and we continue to work to improve understanding and communication. Fortunately, Dr. [Redacted] has not encountered a similar situation since Mr. Dickson's experience. He has received education on the policies and resources available at the KEC for accommodating patients who are unable to wear a mask.*

**5. Complainant asks why there is discriminatory Policy that contradicts AHS directive HCA-267 and still lack of understanding of the directory? Complainant asks why staff appeared to have not read or understood the masking policy?**

*As previously mentioned, the masking policy appears to have been misinterpreted by the screening staff and as there are no longer screeners at the KEC, and Dr. [Redacted] patients no longer require a mask exemption letter, we are confident Mr. Dickson will not encounter an issue again.*

*Thank you for the opportunity to answer Mr. Dickson's questions. We wish him all the best.*

Thank you again for contacting Patient Relations. We hope this feedback addresses your questions. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have further questions.

Kind regards, [Redacted]  
Patient Concerns Consultant

Healthy Albertans.  
Healthy Communities.  
**Together.**

