



Government  
— of —  
Saskatchewan

Minister of Health

Legislative Building  
Regina, Canada S4S 0B3

APR 19 2021

Ken Cheveldayoff  
Chair, Standing Committee on Human Services

Dear Chair;

This letter is to correct my response during the April 15, 2021 sitting of the Estimates for the Ministry of Health before the Standing Committee on Human Services where Ms. Mowat questioned the process by which COVID-19 patients are counted in Saskatchewan hospitals.

I sincerely apologize as I was mistaken in my response at Committee where I stated that patients in hospital who are no longer considered COVID-19 positive are excluded from counts of hospitalized patients. In Saskatchewan, in order to capture the impact of COVID-19 on our hospital system, we count and report hospitalizations of both actively infectious as well as non-infectious COVID-status patients.

Patients in a regular hospital bed are considered non-infectious (or recovered from active infection) 10 days after a positive test result. Patients in the intensive care unit (ICU) are considered non-infectious 20 days after a positive COVID-19 test result. Patients admitted due to COVID could experience lingering care needs after the period of active infection so they continue to be counted in our publicly reported COVID-19 hospitalization numbers. This is the same for any cause for hospitalization, as an individual's initial diagnosis will remain in their chart for the entire duration of their hospital stay.

It is important that we account for COVID-19 patients for the duration of their care journey as this assists the health system with planning, monitoring, and understanding how many patients in acute care are there due to COVID-19.

I apologize for the inaccuracy of my initial statement.

Sincerely,

Paul Merriman  
Minister of Health