

TCAG COVID-19 UPDATE – May 28, 2020

Dear TCAG clients:

It has been two months since our initial update on March 17, 2020. Throughout this period, TCAG has remained open, after an initial ramp-down in activities following institutional guidelines. From the beginning, TCAG has been deemed to have essential functions in the SickKids Research Institute, supporting both important ongoing research, and many new COVID-19 related projects.

As the Research Institute moves toward a staged re-opening of the Peter Gilgan Centre for Research and Learning, beginning on June 1, we are continuing with the following measures.

- TCAG will continue to operate with only essential laboratory and management staff, following all institutional safety standards. As the re-start of activities throughout the building ramps up, we will use staggered shifts to minimize the number of staff on site at any given time.
- “Dry-lab” staff (bioinformaticians, statisticians, and other scientists involved in project design, management, and data analysis), as well as key administrative and finance personnel, will continue to work remotely.
- Some facilities and services will continue to operate at reduced capacity. Accordingly, experimental turnaround times may be longer than usual.
- There will continue to be no access to TCAG for non-SickKids employees, except under special circumstances (pre-approved by the Research Institute).
- Remote drop-boxes for sequencing samples and oligonucleotide deliveries (at the Medical Sciences Building, MaRS, Mount Sinai Hospital, and the Earth Sciences Centre) will remain out of use. Samples from non-SickKids employees will still be accepted in the PGCRL lobby. Oligonucleotides will be available for pickup in the lobby.

These updated policies are designed to allow for increasing user demand, while remaining sensitive to concerns about staff safety. TCAG is committed to working with its staff, SickKids Occupational Health and Safety, and SickKids Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) to ensure the safety of our staff and the immediate TCAG family, and others in the building.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our clients, collaborators, and friends in the scientific community for your patience, cooperation, and support. We will continue to provide updates via the TCAG website. Any questions can be directed to TCAG’s Manager, Jo-Anne Herbrick, jherbrick@sickkids.ca.

Sincerely,

Stephen Scherer, Scientific Director
Lisa Strug, Associate Director
Richard Wintle, Assistant Director
Jo-Anne Herbrick, TCAG Manager