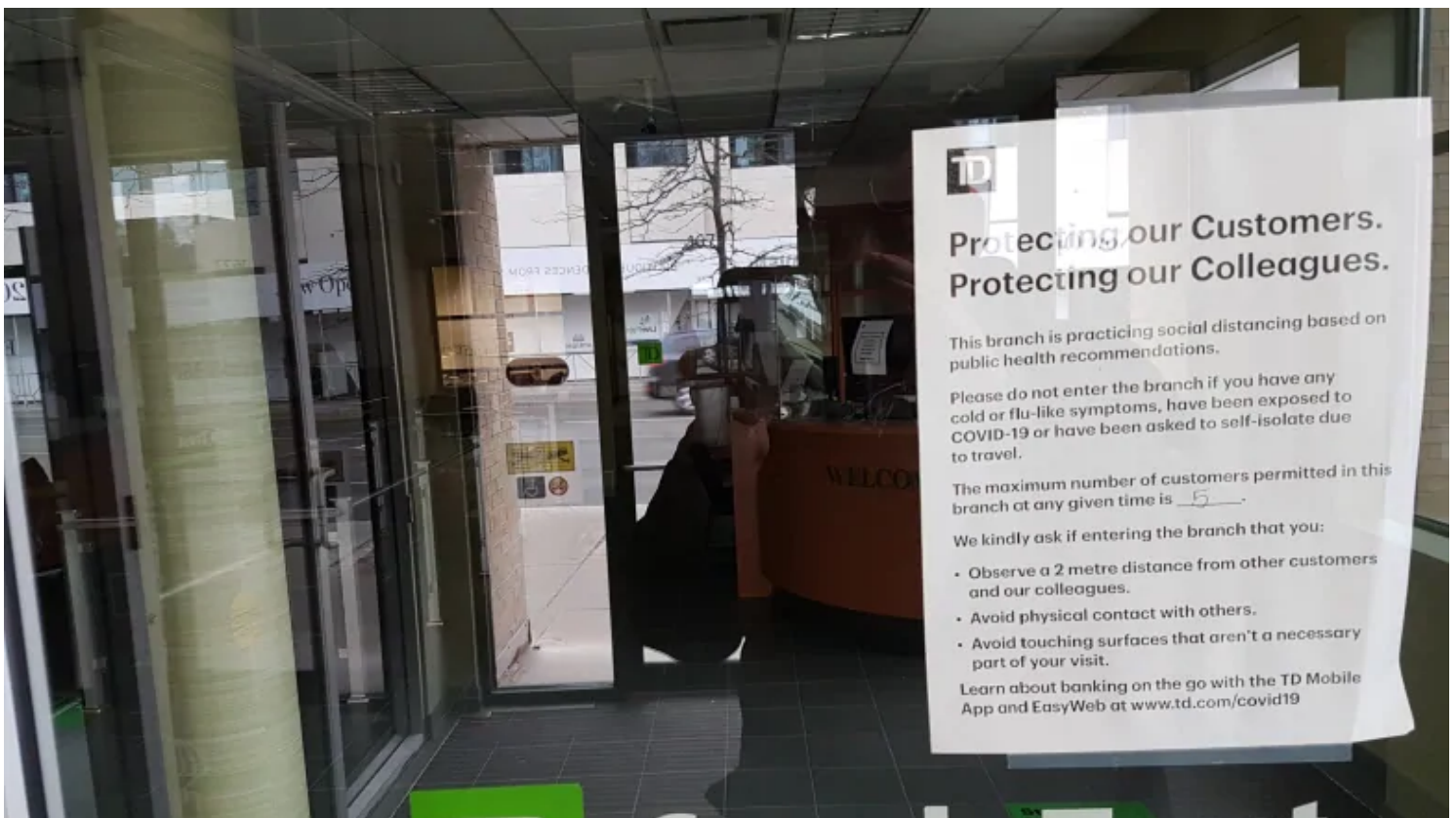


Toronto

'It's a slap in the face': Toronto doctor says he was told he can't enter local TD branch

TD says screening questions don't include asking if someone's a health-care worker

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A sign at the entrance of a TD branch in Toronto lays out safety precautions to minimize the spread of COVID-19. Branches have also been instructed to ask screening questions to customers as they enter. (CBC)

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A Toronto doctor says he's "very concerned" about TD Bank's COVID-19 policies after he says he was told that he wasn't allowed to enter his local branch — simply because he's a health-care worker.

Dr. Coleman Rotstein, a University of Toronto professor and organ transplant specialist with the University Health Network, says it began when his daughter paid a visit to the TD branch on Avenue Road in North York last week.

As she was entering, he told CBC Toronto, a security guard stopped her and asked if she was a health-care worker.

"Then she asked the guard, 'What if I was a health-care worker?' And the guard said, 'No, you cannot come into the bank.'"

Rotstein says he then called the branch himself and a teller confirmed that health-care workers are not allowed inside, and that he was encouraged to do his banking online or by phone.

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His wife, who is also a doctor, called a manager as well and was told the policy is in place at all TD branches, Rotstein says.

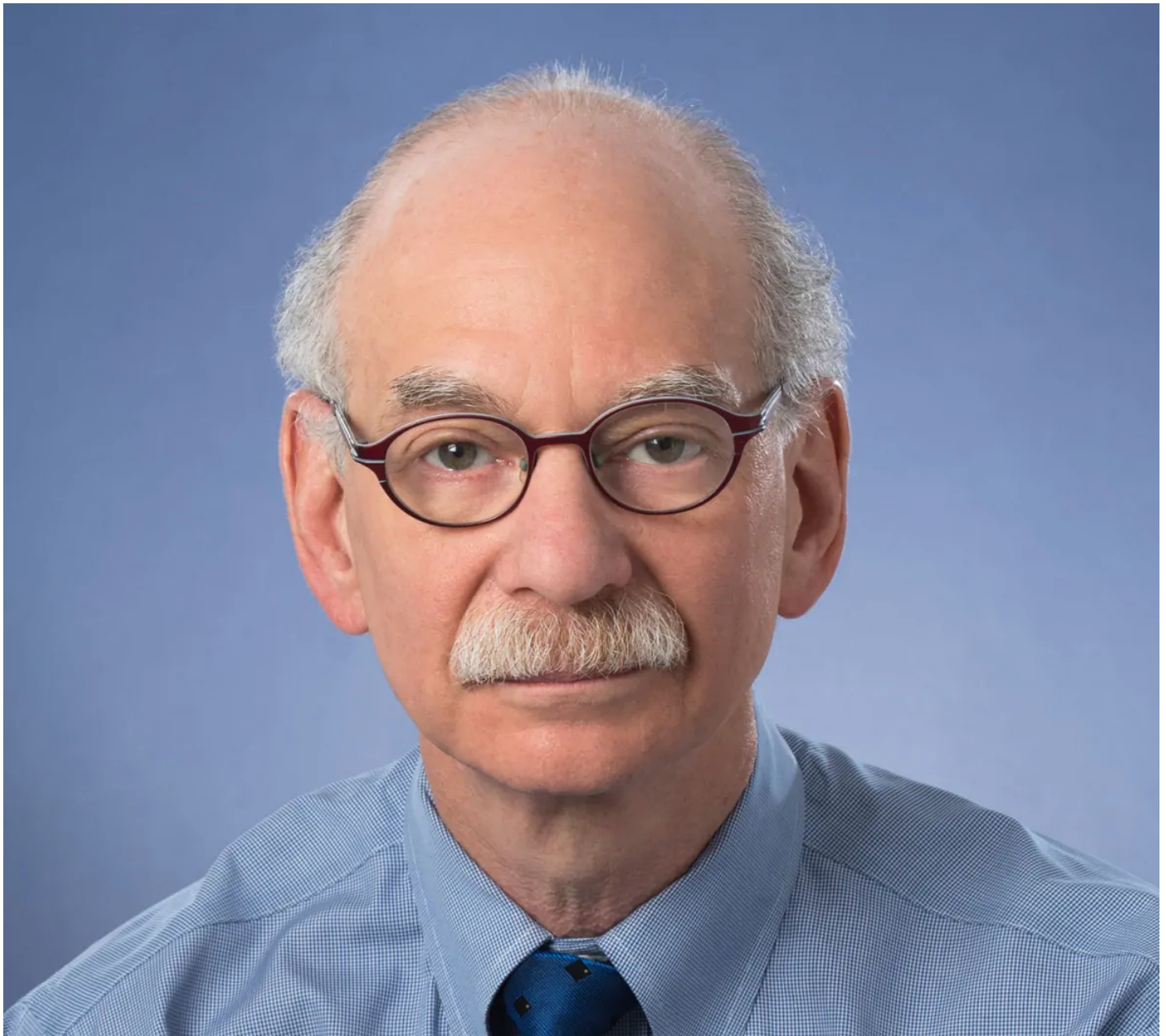
"I don't think it's fair. It's a slap in the face," he told CBC Toronto.

TD screening customers at the door

A TD spokesperson says the bank is screening customers at branch entrances with questions about whether they have been exposed to COVID-19 or whether they've left the country in the last two weeks.

Questions about whether someone is a health-care worker are not included, according to TD's statement.

The bank also says they are making an extra effort to accommodate health-care and essential workers by using a closed branch "to serve calls exclusively from health-care workers" and offering priority phone service for health-care workers and the elderly.



Dr. Coleman Rotstein says: 'Going to the pharmacy, going to the grocery store, no one else asks' whether he's a health-care worker. (Visual Services/University Health Network)

CBC Toronto asked whether TD plans to reach out to the Avenue Road branch to discuss Rotstein and his family's experience.

The TD spokesperson confirmed they will "share this customer's feedback with our team."

Other banks allowing healthcare workers in

Other major banks contacted by CBC Toronto, including CIBC, Scotiabank and the Bank of Montreal, confirm they are allowing health-care workers to bank in person, but say they

are urging all customers to bank online or over the phone when possible.

The Royal Bank says health-care workers are allowed inside, as long as they're wearing personal protective equipment if and when they treat patients with COVID-19.

Professor Chris MacDonald, who teaches ethics at the Ted Rogers School of Management at Ryerson University, acknowledges it's a difficult time for businesses trying to balance the safety of employees and serving customers.



Ryerson University professor Chris MacDonald says businesses during the pandemic are facing a challenge crafting policies that balance employee safety and customer service. (Talia Ricci/CBC)

MacDonald says whatever a business's safety policy is, the key is being ready to explain why it was chosen.

"First and foremost, it's important to have a thoughtful answer available," he said.

CBC Toronto also reached out to the Ontario Medical Association for reaction.

The association's president, Sohail Gandhi, writes that while they have not confirmed any kind of policy barring health-care workers with TD, businesses should be "coming together to make life easier for doctors."

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