

Clinical Response Guidelines for COVID-19 for outpatient settings

(e.g., primary care clinics, private medical offices, urgent and primary care centres, NH clinics)
Other guidelines and resources on [OurNH COVID-19 page](#)

SCREENING - in advance by phone AND when arriving in-person, for EACH encounter
Are there ANY compatible COVID-19 symptoms: fever, chills, cough or worsening of chronic cough, shortness of breath, runny nose, sore throat, loss of sense of smell or taste, headache, fatigue, diarrhea, loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting, muscle aches

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - Regardless of screening results, when providing direct physical care to patients (within two meters), perform thorough hand hygiene, don PPE: medical mask, eye protection, and gloves

Yes

Don't know

No

High risk screen of COVID-19 or unknown risk:

1. Don additional PPE: gown
2. Have patient don medical mask and use hand sanitizer
3. Immediately inform patient of requirements for **isolation (contact/droplet precautions)**
4. Screening staff/clinician escort patient to **Designated Care Provision Area** using **Designated Route of Movement** (if available)
5. Place patient in isolation (contact/droplet precautions) per local process
6. Additional precautions including N95 mask with eye protection must be worn during aerosol-generating procedures (i.e., CPR)
7. All equipment brought into patient room must remain in room until disinfected

Low risk screen of COVID-19:

1. Use routine precautions

PROVIDE ROUTINE CARE

Arrange for COVID-19 testing

1. Determine if testing for COVID-19 ([BCCDC guidelines](#))
 - Primary Care Provider or NH Virtual Clinic can assess and provide lab requisition
 - Sample can be collected on-site if capacity (swabs, PPE and transport)
 - If no capacity on-site, send requisition directly to community collection centre. Patient will be contacted by collection site

PROVIDE ROUTINE CARE

Discharge patient home with instructions

1. Ensure patient receives relevant patient handout(s) from BCCDC:
 - [Self-Isolation after a COVID-19 Test](#)
 - [How to isolate for those who have COVID-19 or respiratory symptoms](#)
 - [Guide for caregivers and household members of those with COVID-19 \('close contacts'\)](#)
2. Escort patient through **Designated Route of Movement** (if available)

If at any time the patient presents shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chest pain, confusion, OR loss of consciousness

PATIENT REQUIRES HIGHER LEVEL OF CARE

1. Contact the Emergency Department to provide pre-notification of suspected COVID-19 patient's arrival. If you can't get through, proceed with #2.
2. Inform patient to present to the Emergency Department Triage Desk and **not** the waiting room.
3. If patient unable to transport self, call 9-1-1 to arrange transport to Emergency Department: state "**Suspected COVID-19 (Coronavirus).**"

Contact Pam Mulroy

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Use these guidelines in conjunction with [Site Preparation Checklist for COVID-19 for outpatient settings](#)

SCREENING & PPE

- **Screen ALL patients** presenting to outpatient settings for COVID-19 symptoms
- Follow guidance for PPE usage, donning and doffing: [Personal Protective Equipment](#) (BCCDC).
- Health care workers will perform a risk assessment at point of care; staff may require additional PPE.¹
- For additional PPE information and guidance, see [OurNH COVID-19 page](#) under Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) header.

ISOLATION (CONTACT/DROPLET PRECAUTIONS)

- Immediately upon high risk screen escort patient to **Designated Care Provision Area** using **Designated Route of Movement** (if available)
 - **GOAL:** rapid isolation of patient to reduce risk of transmission
 - Minimize patient movement; and traffic/visitors into patient room
 - Post signage on door
- For all high-risk screens, ensure all relevant staff are aware of room cleaning requirements prior to next patient use.

ARRANGE FOR COVID-19 TESTING

- If **referring to community collection centres**, complete lab requisition and fax directly to the collection centre.
- Collection centre will contact patient to make an appointment.
- If **collecting sample onsite**, follow [COVID-19: Testing Guidelines for British Columbia](#) (BCCDC). Check the [BCCDC Viral Testing](#) page for most up-to-date information.
 - Collect the most appropriate sample depending on site process, either a Nasopharyngeal (NP) Swab ([video by UBC and Providence Health Care](#)) or [mouth rinse and gargle](#) (BCCDC).
- Transcribe the priority code from the requisition to sample container, and write code again at the top of the requisition so it is easily visible to the lab.
- Create labels following local process. All samples (cylindrical tube) must be affixed with a label lengthwise which states: Patient last name, first name, PHN or DOB, specimen type or specimen source (e.g. NP swab), collection date and time, patient group code² in **RED**.
- Store samples at 4°C after collection.
- Place the sample in biohazard bag (one per bag) and requisition into outer pocket. Package and transport following TDG Category B Guidelines.
- Send to local laboratory for processing. Do not ship elsewhere otherwise sample cannot be tracked.

Lab Requisition

- Standard outpatient and/or [PHSA virology requisitions](#) are acceptable
- Symptom information is NOT required on the requisition
- Add "**COVID-19**" to alert lab staff to use additional PPE when handling samples
- Include patient group code in **RED** – as appropriate

Patient Group Codes

HCW1	HCW direct care; first responders
HCW2	HCW indirect care
LTC	Long Term Care Facility
OBK	Outbreaks, clusters or case contacts; homeless/unstable housing
HOS	Hospital (inpatient); ED with intent to admit; 3 rd trimester pregnancy; renal and cancer patients
CMM	Community or outpatient including UPCCs
CGT	People living in congregate settings
TREPL	Tree planters
SCHOOL	Schools
FN-CMM	Specific First Nations locations due to remoteness

RESOURCES

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE TEAM: 1-855-565-2990 or CentralCDHUB@northernhealth.ca from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday to Friday. After hours, NH Medical Health Officer on-call 250-565-2000, press 7 for Switchboard Health

NH VIRTUAL CLINIC

- To help answer questions and concerns from Northern BC residents: **1-844-645-7811**
- To assess symptoms and refer to NH collection site for COVID-19 testing if needed

PROVINCIAL WORKPLACE CENTRE

- If suspected Health Care Worker exposure: 1-866-922-9464

INFECTION CONTROL PROFESSIONAL: contact as needed

BCCDC: for additional information

¹ [COVID-19: Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic PPE Allocation Framework](#), p.16

² If patient group code is missing from the requisition, the sample will still be processed.

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OurNH COVID-19 page: for signage, patient information handouts, or other resources

INTERIM

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