

# Clinical Response Guidelines for COVID-19 for community based services

(e.g. 1:1 and group sessions, community outreach)  
Other guidelines and resources on OurNH COVID-19 page

**SCREENING** - in advance by phone AND when arriving in-person, for EACH encounter, for patient AND household members

**Are there ANY compatible COVID-19 symptoms:** fever, chills, cough or exacerbation 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?

**PPE** - Regardless of screening results, when providing direct physical care to patients (within 2m), perform thorough hand hygiene, don PPE: surgical/procedural mask, eye goggles/face shield, and gloves

Yes

Don't know

No

## High risk screen of COVID-19 or unknown risk

1. Don additional PPE: gown.
2. Have client don a surgical/procedural mask and use hand sanitizer
3. Immediately inform client of requirements for **isolation (contact/droplet precautions)**
4. Ensure patient receives relevant patient handout(s) from BCCDC: [How to isolate for those who have COVID-19 or respiratory symptoms](#)
5. Call NH Virtual Clinic (1-844-645-7811)
6. Additional precautions including N95 mask with eye protection must be worn during aerosol-generating procedures (i.e. CPR)

## Low risk screen of COVID-19:

1. Use universal precautions
2. Provide care as per care plan

## One-to-One Clinical Session

1. Determine if clinical visit can be provided virtually (e.g. by telephone).
2. If virtual visit is appropriate schedule and proceed as usual, consider shorter more frequent virtual visit as per client plan of care.
3. If not possible or suitable to conduct virtual care session, follow [Clinical Response Guidelines for COVID-19 for outpatient settings](#).

**Home Visit** - [Clinical Response Guidelines for COVID-19 for in-home visits and in-home care provision](#)

## Community Outreach

1. Maintain physical distance of two meters and conduct screening of client.
2. Proceed based on **low or high risk screen** as above.

## Group Session

1. Screen individuals registered for group session, preferably by phone, prior to group initiation.
2. If group member is **low risk screen**, proceed with group appointment planning.
3. Screen upon arrival to each group session. Groups will proceed only if they can maintain physical distancing of two meters.
4. If group member is **high risk screen**, plan with the client to provide virtual services as per plan of care.
5. Immediately inform patient of requirements for **isolation (contact/droplet precautions)**.
7. Immediately refer the individual to the handout from BCCDC on [How to isolate for those who have COVID-19 or respiratory symptoms](#) and to the NH Virtual Clinic (1-844-645-7811).

**If at any time the patient presents shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chest pain, confused, 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.
2. Assist client in determining safe transportation – <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care/clinical-care/first-responders>
3. Inform client to present to the Emergency Department Triage Desk and not the waiting room.
4. If urgent care required, call '9-1-1' to arrange transport to Emergency Department: State "Suspected COVID-19 (Coronavirus)."

Contact Aaron Bond, Michelle Lawrence and/or Chelan Zirul

This document will be updated to reflect practice changes as they are released. The printed version may be outdated – visit the OurNH COVID-19 page for the most current version.

Primary and Community Care - Version 4 – July 16, 2020

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When appropriate, use these guidelines in conjunction with [Site Preparation Checklist for COVID-19 for outpatient settings](#)

## SCREENING & PPE

- **Screen ALL patients** for COVID-19 symptoms
- Follow guidance for PPE usage, donning and doffing: [Personal Protective Equipment](#) (BCCDC).
- Health care workers can judge their own safety in relation to their personal circumstances and the care activities that they are engaging in; staff may use additional PPE if they choose.<sup>1</sup>
- 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 in a care setting, 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.

## RESOURCES

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

### NH COVID-19 ONLINE CLINIC AND INFORMATION LINE

- 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

**OurNH COVID-19 page:** Please contact Northern Health Communications Advisor, Bailee Denicola at [Bailee.Denicola@northernhealth.ca](mailto:Bailee.Denicola@northernhealth.ca) if you require signage, patient information handouts, or other resources found on OurNH.

<sup>1</sup> [PPE Allocation Framework](#), p.16; NH Department Risk Assessment, p.11