



CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) INFECTION CONTROL POLICIES

Updated 19 May 2020

The risk of transmission at busy workplaces and other institutions is a direct function of two variables: the number of contacts (the number of people present at the same time) and the contact intensity (the type of contact ie. close or distant and the length of contact and brief or prolonged). These are factors that we can rate as low, medium and high risks.

We are fortunate to be part of Phase 2 of BC's plan to reopen the economy amongst these unprecedented times. We will be controlling our number of contacts per hour by spacing out our hours from 7 AM – 8 PM. As a clinic we will need to follow proper strategies to be able to help lessen the spread of COVID-19 by decreasing our contact intensity. Those strategies are reviewed in this document and based on the recommendations of the British Columbia Centre of Disease Control (BC CDC).

1. PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES

Self - Isolation

If a health care provider or administrative staff member comes down with common-cold, influenza, or COVID-19 like symptoms they are encouraged to stay home, be assessed by their health care provider and tested for COVID-19.

When someone is symptomatic, they should self-isolate and follow directions provided by their health care provider. Self-isolation is also advised for those who are considered a close contact of a confirmed case and are waiting to see if they develop COVID-19 illness.

Quarantine

Quarantine is a term typically reserved for persons who return from travel outside the country and are at risk of developing COVID-19. If a person is found to be a confirmed case of COVID-19, public health staff will ensure there is robust contact tracing and management of any clusters or outbreaks. They will also ensure that person has access to health care providers and that appropriate supports are in place.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES

Administrative Staff

Our Administrative staff is the first line of defence in protecting ourselves and the public from the spread of COVID-19. Public areas of the clinic will have to be cleaned and sanitized



regularly. This section offers some guidance on this task. Each clinician will be responsible for their individual treatment rooms however the public washroom and common areas will need to be monitored by administrative staff.

Clinic spaces should be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the BCCDC's Environmental Cleaning and Disinfectants for Clinic Settings document. Available as a PDF at http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/CleaningDisinfecting_PublicSettings.pdf

This includes:

- Shared surfaces and items should be cleaned **between patients**. These include upper surface of reception desk, debit machine (unless tap was used), chairs (if used) and pens.
- Frequently-touched surfaces should be **cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day**. If possible we are recommending that they are wiped down on a 1 – 2 hour basis depending on the traffic flow through the clinic.
 - These include door handles, light switches, telephones, keyboards, mouse, printer, cell phones, soap dispensers, paper towel dispenser, reception desk and all hard surfaces in bathrooms such as sinks, faucets, handles.
 - Please record all cleaning and disinfecting in the administrative cleaning log.
- General cleaning and disinfecting of procedure and examination rooms should occur **at least twice a day**.
- Clean and disinfect any surface that is visibly dirty.
- Use common, commercially-available detergents and disinfectant products and closely follow the instructions on the label.
- Empty garbage containers **daily**.
- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning blood or body fluids, for example, runny nose, vomit, stool, urine.
- Perform hand hygiene before wearing and after removing gloves.

This section is meant to offer guidance and cannot be used to replace common sense. If a surface in the reception area or an item was contacted directly by a patient it should be cleaned and disinfected in a timely manner. An example would be if a patient did some stretching against a wall while waiting to pay.

Therapy Staff

Use cleaning spray and cloth to wipe down all surfaces that patient has come into contact with. This needs to be completed between each patient. It is advised to spray the cloth and wipe all surfaces and then spray all surfaces. Leave the spray on the surface for 3 – 4 minutes before wiping residual spray off.



Common items that will need to be cleaned and disinfected are:

- Chair
- Bed/Table
- Pillow Cases
- Doorhandles
- Equipment (band, wall, weights, cups, etc)
- Coat Rack
- Desk
- Walls

Physical Changes to Clinic

- Patients are advised to wait outside the clinic until their appointment time and not arrive more than 5 minutes prior to their appointment.
- Waiting room will only be open to patients that essentially need it. An example of this is someone who gets dropped off and they cannot stand for longer than 5 minutes without aggravating their condition. Chairs can be made available for patients to sit on outside. Please remember these chairs do NOT have arm rests.
- Alcohol-based hand rubs (ABHR) with a minimum of 70% alcohol are available at the reception counter and near therapy rooms.
- Therapy rooms should only include necessary equipment required to perform services.
- Supplies will be kept in closed cabinets/containers to minimize the risk of contamination.
- Feel free to keep office room doors open when appropriate to avoid recurrent contamination of doorknobs and high touch contact points.
- When possible, increase air circulation (exchanges) and ventilation in patient areas (e.g., open windows or using well-maintained heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC) systems to circulate air).
- Signage on proper hand hygiene will be placed near all sinks and by primary hand sanitizer dispensers.
- Signage is placed in appropriate areas to help direct traffic to proper entrance and exit doors.
- Partitions have been installed at the front desk where physical distancing cannot be maintained.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES

Physical Distancing and Minimizing Physical Contact

The following physical distancing strategies to maintain 2 metres between two people should be implemented where possible:

- Waiting room is closed unless patient essentially requires a chair to sit in and has been dropped off at the clinic.
- Avoid close greetings (e.g., handshakes, hugs).
- Clinic hours have been extended to allow for staggering of shifts and appointments.
- Appointment times have been extended to allow therapists and staff more time to ensure proper cleaning procedures have been followed.
- Manage flow of people in common areas, including waiting rooms and hallways. This is especially important at First Avenue when bringing patients into the clinic and when taking the patient from your room to the main lobby area. Please lead your patient and ensure that the hallway is empty prior to entering the hallway. If your patient has to go to the bathroom then lead them to the bathroom from your room.
- Clinic telephone message/voice mail and website(s) should clearly instruct patients where to seek up-to date instructions on assessment for COVID-19. Please see the BC COVID – 19 App or website (<https://bc.thrive.health/>) for information on self-assessment support.
- The health care provider is advised to use Telehealth when possible for appointments. Monitoring your schedule and doing a comprehensive triage process starts prior to a patient arriving at the clinic when applicable.
- Patients/clients with symptoms of common cold, influenza, COVID-19, or other infectious respiratory disease **should only be seen if by not doing so, they would experience undue harm or injury**. Otherwise, services for the patient/clients should be delayed until 10 days from the onset of symptoms AND until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer. If an appointment is deferred, the patient should be informed about what to do if their symptoms get worse.
- If an in-person appointment is required for an older patient or patient with a chronic illness, consider scheduling these as the **first appointments of the shift**.
- If a patient would like to purchase any of our products they are advised to please email or call the clinic the day before your appointment or pickup and we will aim to have it ready for your appointment date. Alternately, we are offering contactless drop off in the Ladysmith region.

4. PERSONAL MEASURES

Stay Home When Sick

- All staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 OR travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days OR were identified as a close contact of a confirmed case must stay home and self-isolate.
- Staff must assess themselves daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or COVID-19 prior to entering the clinic. Please download the BC COVID – 19 App for self-assessment. The daily assessment questionnaire takes 1 – 2 minutes to complete.

- If you are unsure if you should self-isolate then please use the BC COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool and follow the recommendations. If concerned, they can be advised to contact 8-1-1 or the local public health unit to seek further input.
- See the BCCDC's Exposures and Return to Work for Healthcare Workers guidance if healthcare workers and staff are exposed to COVID-19 while at work, what to do if a staff member becomes ill, and criteria for return to work for those with symptoms. This is available at <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care/testing-and-case-management-for-healthcare-workers>

Practice Good Hand Hygiene

- Wash hands with plain soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Antibacterial soap is not needed for COVID-19.
- If sinks are not available, use alcohol-based hand rub containing at least 70% alcohol. Apply a coin sized amount and rub the sanitizer in your hands for 20 seconds.
- If hands are visibly soiled, alcohol-based hand rub may not be effective at eliminating respiratory viruses. Soap and water are preferred when hands are visibly dirty.
- Hand hygiene stations are set up at the clinic entrance, so everyone can perform hand hygiene when they enter and exit the clinic.
- It is administrative staff responsibility to ensure hand washing supplies are well stocked at all times including plain soap, paper towels in the bathrooms and alcohol-based hand rub with a minimum of 70% alcohol in the hand sanitizer dispensers.
- Paper towels should be disposed of in non-touch waste-baskets lined with a garbage bag.

When to Practice Good Hand Hygiene

- For patients/clients and staff, hand hygiene should be performed:
 - On entering the clinic
 - On entering the examination/procedure room
 - On leaving the examination/procedure room
 - After using the washroom
 - After using a tissue for their face
 - After coughing or sneezing
- For therapists
 - Before and after contact with patient or the patient care environment
 - Before and after breaks
 - Before clean or sterile procedures
 - After risk of body fluid exposure
 - Before donning PPE
 - In between each step when doffing PPE
 - Before and after performing cleaning and disinfecting procedures

Respiratory Etiquette

- Cough or sneeze into your elbow sleeve or a tissue
- Throw away used tissues and immediately perform hand hygiene
- Refrain from touching their eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands
- Refrain from sharing any food, drinks, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, or vaping devices.

5. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

“Where there is low incidence and prevalence of COVID-19, additional PPE over and above that required for normal precautions is not required.” - BCCDC

Point-of-care risk assessment (PCRA) for COVID-19

Prior to any patient interaction, all health care providers have a responsibility to assess the infectious risks posed to themselves, other health care workers, other patients and visitors from a patient, situation or procedure. The PCRA is based on the health care provider’s professional judgment about the clinical situation, as well as up-to-date information on how the specific health care facility has designed and implemented physical and administrative controls, and the use and availability of PPE. Performing a PCRA to determine what PPE is necessary is also important to avoid over-reliance on PPE, misuse or waste. Over-reliance on PPE may result in a false sense of security.

We ask that all health care providers form a general impression of the patient when they make initial contact with that patient. If they look unwell then we advise that you ask how they are doing and if they are feeling well. All patients should be asked if they have completed the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment (app or online) on the day of their appointment and if they are following the recommendations based on this assessment.

Health care providers and staff who have direct contact with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 must follow droplet and contact precautions. This includes wearing a surgical/procedure mask, eye protection, gloves and gown. As a clinic we are advising against treating patients that have symptoms suggestive of COVID – 19, common cold or other infectious respiratory disease unless by not being seen, **they would experience undue harm or injury**. Otherwise, services for the patient/clients should be delayed until 10 days from the onset of symptoms AND until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer. If an appointment is deferred, the patient should be informed about what to do if their symptoms get worse.

Key Points on PPE

- Incorrect use and doffing of PPE can expose healthcare providers and staff to infectious agents and contaminate the environment.

- PPE is not required for workers who work more than 2 meters from patients at all times.
- PPE is required for workers that cannot maintain the 2 meters physical distancing recommendation. All workers in this situation must wear a mask.
- It is strongly suggested that patients wear a mask if they have a mask. Patients are advised to have their mask on prior to the appointment. Currently the province is low on masks and not recommending that all patients wear masks until further date. Each college has a slightly different stance on this topic and can be altered by therapists as needed.
- Patients presenting in-person to clinic with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 but are reported as allergies should be provided a mask for the duration of their time spent in the clinic. This mask must be disposed of at the completion of the appointment by the patient.
- When wearing PPE:
 - Avoid touching your mask or eye protection unnecessarily.
 - If you must touch or adjust your mask or eye protection, perform hand hygiene immediately.
 - If a mask becomes wet (ie, you sneeze in it) then dispose of the mask and reapply a new one.
 - If you see a colleague touch or adjust their mask/eye protection, remind them to perform hand hygiene.
 - Use extreme care (slow and cautious) when doffing/removing PPE and always perform hand hygiene when finished.
- Donning and Doffing PPE Posters provide guidance for staff and have been placed by each healthcare workers desk. Please review these on a regular basis until you are comfortable with your routine.
 - Proper donning and doffing of PPE should be practised prior to the treatment of any patients.
 - Hand hygiene is required before donning and after doffing PPE.
 - When doffing, resist the urge to touch your clothes, skin, hair or face with your hands until after the final hand washing.

When Working with Patients with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 or Airborne Diseases

As stated previously, healthcare providers and staff who have direct contact with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 must follow droplet and contact precautions. As a clinic we are advising against treating any patients that have symptoms suggestive of COVID – 19, common cold or other infectious respiratory disease unless by not being seen, **they would experience undue harm or injury**. Otherwise, services for the patient/clients should be delayed until 10 days from the onset of symptoms AND until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer. If an appointment is deferred, the patient should be informed about what to do if their symptoms get worse.

- Use an N95 respirator and eye protection (i.e., goggles or face shield), gloves and gown for procedures that are aerosol generating for patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 or airborne diseases.
- Properly doff, clean and disinfect your eye protection when leaving the patient care area (e.g. at end of shift or during a break).
- Eye protection can be face shields, goggles or safety glasses. When using eye protection for multiple patient encounters, they should be cleaned and disinfected as per the guidance found on the BCCDC Personal Protective Equipment webpage
- Patients presenting in-person to clinic with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 should be given a surgical/procedure mask, if available and medically tolerated.

6. GENERAL WORKPLACE POLICIES

The previously mentioned policies will help reduce our chances of being infected or spreading COVID-19. As general policies we would like to remind everyone:

- Therapists to wear masks during all interactions during your shift. Administrative staff is required to wear a mask if they are leaving the front desk area and are at risk of being within 2 meters of a patient or therapist. An example of this is when re-filling hand dispensers.
- If your mask becomes wet or you sneeze in it then replace the mask immediately
- Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.
- Maintain at least 1 – 2 metre (3 – 6 feet) distance between yourself and others.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid physical contact when greeting (ie, hand shaking)
- Avoid further populating common areas (front desk area and staff room) unless essential. Please make use of outside areas if you would like to take a break away from your desk.
- Patients are advised to stay home and self-isolate even with minor symptoms such as cough, headache, mild fever, until they have recovered.
- Cancellation fee policy is waived for anyone that needs to cancel their appointment in the 24 hours leading up to their appointment due to feeling unwell.
- Stay home and self-isolate even with minor symptoms such as cough, headache, mild fever, until you recover. Have someone bring you supplies. If you need to leave your house, wear a mask to avoid infecting others.
- If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention. Call by telephone (811) in advance if possible and follow the directions of your local health authority.



General Administrative Policies

As staff we will need to be diligent in educating patients on the new policies and procedures. Patients will be made aware to complete the BC COVID Self-Assessment Tool (<https://bc.thrive.health/>) prior to each visit to the clinic through our Jane reminders. If a patient is experiencing any symptoms then they are advised to stay home – no exceptions. Cancellation fees will be waived for anyone that needs to cancel their appointment in the 24 hours leading up to their appointment due to feeling unwell.

- Waiting room closed – all patients are advised to wait outside the clinic until called into the clinic by their therapist.
- Therapists have been asked to book patients for follow up visits as able to limit patient time at the front desk area. Alternative is to have patients call in or book online through our online booking system.
- No guests are allowed in the clinic setting with a patient unless they are required for parental consent or patient assistance. Any guest will need to be screened using the BC Self-Assessment Tool.
- Patients are advised to limit personal belongings and to take any items into their appointment. Patients will not be allowed to use the coat rack in the front desk area.
- Only one front desk staff will be working at a time to provide a safe environment (ie, physical distancing)
- Remind patients to use hand sanitizers when entering and exiting the clinic. Apply a coin sized amount and rub into hands well for 20 seconds.
- Advise patients to stay home and self-isolate even with minor symptoms such as cough, headache, mild fever, until they have recovered.

Prior to Appointments (Administrative)

- Remind patient to complete the BC COVID - 19 Self Assessment on the day of their visit.
- Remind patient that they will be receiving some forms to complete prior to their visit. These forms include COVID – 19 Consent Form and in some instances an Intake Form.
- Email "What to Expect on Your Next Visit" PDF file to the patient
- Advise patients to reschedule (and how to) for individuals who become sick or unwell. There will be the offer of telehealth if appropriate.
- Remind the patient that non-essential caregiver/friends/family are not permitted at the client's appointment unless physical distancing and hand hygiene can be maintained.
- Remind patient to wear a mask if they have one
- Remind patients of new policies (on the the "What to Expect on your Next Visit" PDF form). Examples include waiting room closed, wait outside, therapist will escort in and out of building, hand sanitization procedures, physical distancing, length of treatment, touchless payment, no personal belongings (food, drink, extra clothes), emailed receipt and wear comfortable clothing for the session.



Start of Appointments

- Patients will be waiting outside of the clinic front door or in their vehicle. Exceptions will be made for patients that absolutely require the waiting room (Ex. Get dropped off and require a place to sit). Chairs will be placed on the patio at First Ave as needed – please have patients use these chairs first before the waiting room. Note that these chairs on the patio do not have arm rests and will need to be cleaned and disinfected between patients.
- Get a **general impression** of your patient as you greet them. If they look unwell then chat with them outside the clinic and ensure that they have completed the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment. Ask when they completed the BC COVID – 19 Self-Assessment and what the recommendations were. If they are suffering from allergies then they must wear a mask in the clinic. If they are in fact feeling unwell then advise them that we cannot unfortunately see them in the clinic and to stay home and call 811 for further recommendations. Please note any of these patients with the front desk so they are aware and do not charge a cancellation fee. Advise these patients that Telehealth is an alternative form of treatment in most cases.
- Ensure patients bring all personal belongings into the treatment room. The **coat rack is not in use** and items cannot be stored in the waiting room during the patient’s therapy session.
- Advise patient to use the sanitizer dispensers in the lobby as they enter the clinic. Apply a coin sized amount and rub for 20 seconds.
- Be aware that **the hallway is an area of concern**. Ensure that the hallway is empty prior to walking your patient to the room. Therapist should be leading the walk to the treatment room.

During Appointment

- Note any surfaces that the patient touches during their session. This includes but is not limited to walls, desks, handles, coat rack, equipment, chair and bed.
- Avoid further populating common areas (front desk area and staff room) unless essential
- Mask must be worn for the duration of all appointments by therapists.

Post Appointment

- Book patient for next appointment if you have time. This will limit patient’s time in the main lobby after the completion of their appointment. If you are running behind then make note of the patients name and when you would like to see them next. At the completion of your shift please email the front desk your list of patients that you want them to follow up with and when you would like to see the patient next. An alternative is to advise the patient to book online.



- As previously stated, use cleaning spray and cloth to wipe down all surfaces that patient has come into contact with:
 - Chair
 - Bed/Table
 - Doorhandles
 - Equipment (band, wall, weights, cups, etc)
 - Coat Rack
 - Desk
 - Walls
- Ensure you clean the surface first and then disinfect afterwards = 2 wipes. The clean involves spraying a clean cloth and wiping all surfaces that the patient has come into contact with. Disinfect by spraying all surfaces that the patient has come in contact with and letting the solution sit for 3 – 4 minutes before wiping off. Use the opposite side of the cloth to complete this and dispose of the cloth immediately after. Perform hand hygiene following this procedure.
- Check hallway when exiting the room to ensure it is clear for you and your patient to move to the front desk area.
- Remind patients to use hand sanitizers when exiting the clinic. Apply a coin sized amount and rub for 20 seconds
- Make the patient aware that the exit is out the side door.

End of the Day

- Ensure that treatment room and equipment has been sanitized to prevent surface transmission.
- Towels or any other items contacting the client (ie, gown) are to be discarded or laundered between each use.
- Have a change of street clothes with you. If you plan on stopping somewhere between work and home it is advised that you shower at the clinic and change into your street clothes before leaving the clinic. Place work clothing into a bag and launder it upon returning home.
- Work clothing should be laundered after every shift.
- If you are not planning on stopping anywhere between work and home it is advised that you disrobe and shower immediately upon returning home after each shift.
- Consider having separate footwear at work.

Payment Policies

Changes to our administrative and payment policies are for the protection of our patients and staff. These include:

- Only **CREDIT CARD, DEBIT and ETRANSFERS** will be accepted forms of payment.



- We **strongly suggest** that patients' credit card information be on file for any future appointments. Jane uses the highest certification of payment security. Patients can do this themselves through their Jane profile.
- Receipts and other documentation will be emailed out to patients. Ensure you have the right email for the patient if you are unsure.
- Rebooking appointments by phone (**250-924-4444**), email (**activesolutionsladysmith@gmail.com**) or online at **<https://activesolutionshealth.janeapp.com/>**
- There is a sign with this information on it at the front desk. You can advise patients to take a picture of that sign with their phone so they have the information with them. We are advising against handing out any business cards at this time.

Patient Flow – Main Lobby

- The main lobby has two "X" on the ground. The one nearest to the desk is for the paying customer. The second X is 2 meters back (towards the front window) for a waiting patient. If a therapist is entering the main lobby with a third patient – please be aware that you may have to go back to your treatment room until we have one patient in the lobby so that we obey the physical distancing rules.
- All patients and staff are to exit out of the side door to the patio area.
- If a patient has entered prior to their appointment you can remind them that the waiting room is closed and politely ask them to wait outside. If they have a question then advise them to call the clinic from outside the clinic doors to discuss the matter.
- At FJCC only one patient is allowed in the main lobby area at a time due to space concerns. Any other patient is required to wait outside or in a treatment room until the appropriate time.

7. FINAL REMARKS

Thanks everyone for your patience and understanding as we quickly adjust to the new normal. This will take some time to get used to. **Please don't stress about it and ask questions.** We have an incredible team that has conquered many challenges. We are confident that if we all do our best the team will succeed.

References: http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID19_IPCGuidelinesCommunityBasedAlliedHCPsClinicSettings.pdf