



Covid-19 Protocols

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is an essential element in preventing the transmission of disease-causing microorganisms. If used **incorrectly**, PPE will fail to prevent transmission and may facilitate the spread of disease.

Therapist and Staff PPE:

Given the highly infectious nature of the novel coronavirus, Covid-19, healthcare workers providing direct patient care **must** wear a surgical/procedure mask continuously, at all times, and in all areas of the workplace if they are involved in direct patient contact or cannot maintain adequate physical distancing from patients and co-workers.

PPE requirements:

For therapists, surgical or procedure masks are the minimum acceptable standard. Therapists and clinical staff who are not able to maintain the 2m physical distancing while providing patient care **must** wear a mask. Non-clinical staff must use a **non-medical mask** when a physical distance of two metres cannot be maintained. It is highly recommended that clients wear a mask for the duration of their visit.

One mask may be used for the entire work shift, but must be discarded and replaced when wet, damaged or soiled, when taking a break and at the end of the day. **N95 respirators are not required.** Masks must be donned and doffed using the following specific sequence to prevent contamination.

Donning mask:

1. Perform hand hygiene
2. Open mask fully to cover from **nose to below chin**
3. Put on mask
4. Secure ties to head (top first) or elastic loops behind ears
5. Mold the flexible band to the bridge of nose (if applicable)
6. Ensure snug fit to face and below chin with no gaping or venting

Doffing mask:

1. Perform hand hygiene
2. Do not touch the front of the mask
3. Carefully remove mask by bending forward slightly, touching only the ties or elastic loops. Undo the bottom tie first then undo the top tie
4. Discard the mask in the garbage
5. If the mask itself is touched during doffing, perform hand hygiene

It is essential that all therapists and staff providing services in a clinic are aware of the proper donning and doffing of PPE. The use of PPE must be precise and ordered to limit the spread of COVID-19. Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness PPE resources must be reviewed and understood before all massage therapists, and staff provide patient care.



Covid-19 Protocols

MOBILE MASSAGE

Providing care in patient's homes has the potential for elevated risk due to the variability of the environments in which the care is provided and the relative lack of control the care provider has compared to a clinic setting. Largely, the requirements for in home care are consistent with the clinic setting.

Screening

Patients/companions – When able to call ahead prior to providing care, have the client complete the self-assessment online or ask them the questions over the phone. When the practitioner arrives at a client's home, always do a point of care risk assessment, and ask the self-assessment questions again. All household members must complete the self-assessment prior to providing client care. If any individuals are experiencing symptoms, recommend the individual contact 811 for direction and reschedule treatment. If no symptoms are reported, don appropriate PPE before entry to the residence. When you're calling clients to complete the Pre-Screening, ask them to place a small garbage can by the front door so you can doff and dispose of your PPE safely. Let the client know they'll need to dispose of your PPE/mask.

Personal Hygiene and PPE

- Cough/Sneeze etiquette – As per clinic procedure
- Hand Hygiene – As per clinic procedure
- Use of PPE – as per clinic procedure with the following additional procedures
 - When proceeding with client care (all risk assessments/screening procedures have been completed) practitioners must wear a surgical/procedure mask at all times if they are involved in direct client contact and cannot maintain adequate social/physical distancing from residents.
 - Clients should also wear a mask. A nonmedical mask is acceptable.
 - The surgical/procedure mask should be immediately changed and safely disposed of whenever it is soiled or wet or whenever the therapist feels it may have become contaminated.
 - All patients should wear a mask if receiving in-person care (a Non-medical grade mask but should meet Public Health Guidelines). If providing masks for patients, the therapist must educate the patient on the proper donning and doffing of masks and observe that it occurs properly.
 - Masks need to be disposed of upon leaving the client's home. Follow procedures to doff appropriate PPE.
 - To dispose of appropriate PPE, surgical/procedural masks when completing a home visit:
 - When you're calling clients to complete the Pre-Screening, ask them to place a small garbage can by the front door so you can doff and dispose of your PPE safely. Let the client know they'll need to dispose of your PPE/mask.
 - Before you doff your PPE, make sure to ask clients and anyone else in the home to remain 6 feet/2 metres back.
 - Put mask in black garbage bag and dispose of in client's garbage can.
 - If either of these cannot be done, remove PPE once you're outside of the client's home. Dispose of the PPE/masks by double bagging black garbage bags. If nonmedical masks are being used due to supply chain issues provision for safely transporting and laundering soiled masks to minimize opportunity for cross contamination (i.e. separate, labeled)



Covid-19 Protocols

Environmental cleaning and disinfection

Proper disinfectant products – all reusable equipment must be disinfected as per Health Canada's guidelines. Consideration should be given to providing dedicated equipment whenever possible.

Required clinic environment adaptations – all applicable risk assessments should be completed to identify and mitigate hazards and risks within the patient's home.

Social Distancing

All household members should be instructed to maintain social distancing from the care provider of 2m during the entire visit. Social distancing should be maintained when applicable by the practitioner to the extent possible during the visit.

Policies, Procedures and Training

All mobile massage therapy practices must adopt written policies and procedures that meet or exceed the requirements outlined in this document. Policies may refer directly to this document but must be made applicable to the particular risk profile/details of the setting/organization. Appropriate records kept.