

COVID-19 Recovery: Public Health and Infection Control Key Principles for Ambulatory Care/Diagnostics

Updated: 15 May 2020

Please note that Providence Health Care is taking the necessary precautions to provide the best possible care in a safe environment for our patients, residents, visitors, staff and medical staff. Every patient needing care, regardless of COVID-19 status, is welcomed at PHC.

Please follow Public Health guidelines and Infection Control principles when planning your recovery efforts for Ambulatory Care. For more information, please visit the [PHC COVID-19 website](#).

Please note: amendments to this document will occur as COVID-19 recovery phases evolve.

Quick Reference:

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1. Patient/Clients

a) Virtual visits

- Virtual visits and telephone-consultation should be prioritized over in-person appointments when appropriate to reduce the patient flow in the clinic.
- For cleaning and disinfecting electronic devices, follow the PHC Guidelines for [Cleaning and Disinfection of Equipment/Devices/Surfaces](#).

b) In person visits

Initial patient and client bookings may need to be limited in order to ensure that patients/clients can follow physical distancing recommendations while accessing services, but should be prioritized by urgency.

- Elective procedures for confirmed COVID-19 patients and those patients who have had contact with, or exposure to, a COVID-19 patient (known and being followed by public health officials) should be delayed until the patient is deemed recovered and non-infectious according to the provincial protocols, or the procedure becomes urgent or emergent.

Before coming to the clinic...

- Clinic staff should contact patients/clients by phone to determine if patients/clients or family members have developed COVID-19 like symptoms, have COVID-19 contact and/or have recent travel history. Please refer to [Script #1](#).
- Standardized pre-screening documentation is available in Cerner with corresponding paper documentation available in SoftMed (SCM).
 - If screening identifies that the patient has COVID-19 –like symptoms, the Clinic team should determine:
 - if the patient needs to be referred for testing, and
 - whether the patient still needs to be seen in person, if a virtual visit is possible or if the visit should be rescheduled to a later date.
- Patients/clients should be reminded to notify staff of any changes in their health prior to coming to clinic.
 - **Action:** Ensure that patients have clinic contact number to notify.
- Patients/clients should be reminded that they will undergo screening assessment at several points (e.g.: phone pre-booking, at the entrance of the facility, at the clinic level)
- Patients/clients should be notified that all appointments/procedures are subject to the discretion of the Most Responsible Provider and may be cancelled or rescheduled at any point.

When arriving at the site...

a) Screening at the site entry point(s)

- Continuing controlled access with specific entry points for public access and staff with security and/or volunteers.
- At the entrance of the facility, greeters/volunteers will conduct screening. Please refer to [Script #2](#).
- At arrival, patients/clients should perform hand hygiene.
 - **Action:** Ensure patients/clients remove gloves, if applicable, and perform hand hygiene. **Gloves should not be put back on.**
- Patients/clients with visible and self-declared COVID-19-like symptoms will be required to wear a surgical/procedure mask provided by the health authority.
 - Other considerations: If the site has physical distancing constraints, the use of masks for all patients and clients, regardless of COVID-19 status may be considered.
- If the patient/client is not symptomatic, they can wear their own masks during their visit.
 - **Action:** ensure directions are accessible to avoid wandering while travelling to destination.

b) Screening at destination

- At arrival, patients/clients should perform hand hygiene.
- As part of the check-in process, look to see if there is current evidence of screening. **If there is no screening within the last 72 hours**, the patient/client will be asked screening questions. Please refer to [Script #3](#).
- COVID-19-like symptomatic patients require droplet and contact precautions. Each area should, if possible, identify a designated examination/isolation room and or waiting area for placement of patients presenting with COVID-19 symptoms where patients can be placed directly upon arrival.
- Alternative solutions to waiting in the common areas should be considered. These solutions may include text messaging and/or decanting to larger gathering areas while waiting to be seen.

During clinic stay...

- Follow the [Point of Care Risk Assessment](#) to determine appropriate PPE requirements.
- Throughout the visit, remind patients/clients to:

- practice respiratory etiquette, such as coughing and sneezing into the elbow, avoiding touching the face, mouth, nose, eyes and, if applicable, mask
- perform hand hygiene.
- maintain physical distancing.

After clinic visit...

- Patients/clients should perform hand hygiene before leaving the clinic and the facility/building.

2. Family/Visitors/Support

- To reduce risks of COVID-19 for patients, clients, family and staff, no visitors are permitted for Ambulatory appointments.
- If the patient/client requires support to attend, this is to be restricted to one person. They should be asked to bring their own mask if possible.
- Support persons who **present with COVID-19 like visible symptoms** should not be permitted to enter the facility for the safety of patients and staff.

3. Personnel/Staff/Medical Staff

All Staff/Medical Staff

- Staff/Medical staff must follow the [PPE Recommendations – Acute](#).
- Staff/Medical staff should be encouraged to clean and disinfect their own work space following the [IPAC Guidelines](#).
- Each clinic should identify a dedicated room for direct placement of high risk/COVID-like symptomatic patients and waiting areas.
- If a patient with **COVID-19-like symptoms** must be seen in the clinic, Staff/Medical staff should place the appointment at the end of the day if possible.
 - If not possible, then the patient should be seen in the dedicated room for direct placement of high risk/COVID-19-like symptomatic patients.
 - If there is a significant concern that the patient is high risk for COVID-19, and there was evidence of gross contamination of the environment by the patient (for example unrestricted coughing and sneezing), the examination room should be closed until terminal clean can be performed.
 - If the examination room cannot be closed, Staff/Medical Staff should clean and disinfect high touch surfaces using appropriate disinfectant wipes, following the PHC Guidelines for [Cleaning and Disinfection of Equipment/Devices/Surfaces](#).
- For patients with **no COVID-19-like symptoms**, Staff/Medical Staff should follow routine department practices for cleaning and disinfection between patients.
- Team meetings and in-person interactions should be replaced with virtual options, as much as possible. If not possible, maintain physical distance.
- Staff/Medical staff must avoid sharing food and snacks.

4. Equipment/Supplies/Environment

Elevators and stairwells

- Physical distancing is encouraged in elevators.
 - An elevator monitor will be available to assist and direct accordingly. Masks can be used to permit increased elevator occupancy.
 - **Action:** Place posters to remind of elevator etiquette, physical distancing and place floor layout in the queue line and inside the elevators to guide users.
- Encourage staff who are able to use stairwells and maintain physical distance to reduce elevator crowding.

Cleaning and disinfecting clinical, administrative and public areas

- *Cleaning Public Areas*
 - Public areas, such as hallways and stairways, should be cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis and when needed.
- *Cleaning clinical areas.*
 - During the examination, any medical/clinic equipment used (e.g. blood pressure cuffs, clipboard) should be cleaned and disinfected by the user following the routine department practices for cleaning and disinfecting.
 - When possible, single use equipment and supplies are recommended.
 - Common areas and high-touch surface areas should be cleaned and disinfected regularly BY THE USERS OF THE AREA, with a focus on high touch points such as reception counters, seating areas (including clinic room seats and armrests), light switches, door handles, toilets, taps, handrails , phones, keyboards, and counter tops.
 - For cleaning instructions, disinfecting and frequency of equipment, refer to the [Infection Prevention and Control Master Equipment Cleaning and Disinfection Manual](#).
- *Cleaning non- clinical areas*
 - Other areas such as lunch rooms, lounges, and offices on the unit should be decluttered, cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis and as needed by those using the space.
- *Cleaning Administrative Offices*
 - High touch surfaces in administrative offices should be decluttered, cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis and when needed by the user of the space.

Layout and flow

- Hand hygiene stations should be available at all doorway entrances and exits and be easily accessible.
 - **Action:** Ensure appropriate hand hygiene supplies are in place and hand hygiene products are maintained
- Seating in staff shared spaces, waiting rooms, cafeterias, coffee shops and common areas (lounges) should be spaced/taped off to maintain two meters separation.
 - If staff lounges are not large enough to accommodate spatial separation, consider staggered breaks or alternate break areas.
- Non-essential items (remote control, magazines, brochures, etc.) should be removed from waiting and gathering areas.
- Alternative solutions for the waiting room should be considered. These solutions may include text messaging and/or decanting to larger gathering areas while waiting to be seen.
- Reception area and clinic hallways should have visual cues to assist in physical distancing (two meters) and, if possible, one way directional flow.
- Requests for Plexiglas will be reviewed on a case by case basis, but will only be considered where work flows would not require extended use PPE.

SCRIPT #1

SCRIPT #1

COVID-19 Recovery: Public Health and Infection Control Key Principles Screening Scripts for Ambulatory Settings

Updated: 15 May 2020

FOR APPOINTMENT REMINDERS AND PATIENT PHONE CALLS

Note: Before calling, please confirm with the identified physician whether this patient is on the essential condition/appointment list.

Hello, my name is (your name), at (hospital & department name). I am calling to confirm your appointment with (Dr/Clinician's name) on (date and time of appointment). As part of our preliminary screening for COVID-19, we have a few questions we will need you to answer:

(NOTE TO CLERICAL STAFF: please reference the tables below and follow the appropriate process outlined)

In the last 14 days, have you:

	No	Yes
Returned from travel outside of Canada?		
Been in close contact with anyone diagnosed with lab confirmed COVID-19?		
Lived or worked in a setting that is part of a COVID-19 outbreak?		
Been advised to self-isolate or quarantine at home by public health?		

Do you have new onset of any of the following symptoms:

	No	Yes
Fever		
Cough: new or worse than usual		
Shortness of breath		
Diarrhea		
Nausea and/or vomiting		
Headache		
Runny nose/nasal congestion		
Sore throat or painful swallowing		
Loss of sense of smell		
Loss of appetite		
Chills		
Muscle aches		
Fatigue		

SCRIPT #1

If NO – Proceed as follows

Thank you for this information. Based on your answers, it does not appear you have any COVID-19 risk factors or symptoms.

Next, we would like to confirm that you will be attending your appointment on (date and time of appointment)?

If cancelling/rebooking - reschedule as appropriate or offer teleconsult/virtual consult, if applicable.

If attending appointment in person:

Please note that Providence Health Care is taking the necessary precautions to provide the best possible care in a safe environment for our patients, residents, visitors, staff and medical staff. Every patient needing care, regardless of COVID-19 status, is welcomed at PHC.

When you arrive to the hospital, you will be asked these questions again. You may have to wait in line to enter the building or elevator. Please arrive only (insert time frame) before your appointment.

If you have a mask at home, please wear it to your appointment. You will be asked to sanitize your hands when you enter the building and when you come to the clinic.

We have a restricted visitor policy in place at the hospital. Please come to your appointment by yourself. If you need assistance, please restrict it to one person and ask them to wear a mask if possible.

If you do develop any fever, cough, shortness of breath or influenza-like symptoms; please follow the recommendations outlined by 8-1-1 or your primary care provider.

If there are any changes to your health prior to coming into the hospital, please notify us at (provide appropriate phone number).

If YES to any of the questions – Proceed as follows (A or B)

Option A – Urgent or Emergent Procedures or Treatments

Note: Proceed as medically indicated, regardless of the patient's COVID-19 status, and should not be delayed for testing or test results. For urgent or emergent procedures or treatments, patients reporting new symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should undergo COVID-19 testing prior, when possible.

Thank you for this information.

Option B – Elective Procedures or Treatments

Note: Elective procedures or treatments for confirmed COVID-19 patients and those patients who have had contact with, or an exposure to, a COVID-19 patient (known and being followed by public health officials) should be delayed until the patient is deemed recovered and non-infectious according to the provincial protocols or the procedure/ treatment becomes urgent or emergent.

SCRIPT #1

Please note that Providence Health Care is taking the necessary precautions to provide the best possible care in a safe environment for our patients, residents, visitors, staff and medical staff. Every patient needing care, regardless of COVID-19 status, is welcomed at PHC.

Based on your answers, we are required to give you some additional instructions prior to your visit:

- If you are able to, please visit a collection centre [near you](#) and get tested prior to appointment.
- If you have a face mask, please wear it when you come in. **If not, please alert the greeter at the hospital entry point and they will provide you with a mask.**
- If you are wearing gloves, you will be asked to remove them and perform hand hygiene. **Please do not wear gloves into the hospital.**
- Upon check-in, you will be asked these screening questions again.
- If you still have COVID-19- like symptoms:
 - Alert the hospital entry point greeters
 - Also alert the front desk clerical staff

Please note we have a restricted visitor policy in place at the hospital. Please come to your appointment by yourself. If you need assistance, please restrict it to one person and ask them to wear a mask if possible.

[NOTE TO CLERICAL STAFF: please try to schedule procedure or treatment at the end of the day, if possible. Also, it is recommended to notify the front desk clerical staff regarding this patient's current COVID-19 status.]

Thank you for this information.

Please note that Providence Health Care is taking the necessary precautions to provide the best possible care in a safe environment for our patients, residents, visitors, staff and medical staff. Every patient needing care, regardless of COVID-19 status, is welcomed at PHC.

Based on your answers, I will need to speak with your physician and check whether we can provide you an appointment by phone or virtual health or if the doctor would like you to come in person on another day.

I will phone you back shortly.

[NOTE TO CLERICAL STAFF: Confer with the physician and ask if the patient should come in person. If the physician suggests a virtual health/telephone visit, call the patient to arrange an appointment. If the physician indicates an in person appointment is required, call the patient and schedule the appointment in 14+ days or earlier if physician dictates.]

Call patient back to arrange appointment.

For those patients requiring in-person appointments: I have spoken with the physician and they would like you to come in person. Can we book an appointment on (date and time of appointment*)?

***[NOTE TO CLERICAL STAFF:** please ensure date of appointment is at least 14 days from symptom onset.]

Please note we have a restricted visitor policy in place at the hospital. Please come to your appointment by yourself. If you need assistance, please restrict it to one person and ask them to wear a mask if possible.

If there are any changes to your health prior to coming into the hospital, please notify us at ([provide appropriate phone number](#)).

For any patients that call back to alert of health changes - please complete the preliminary screening questions again and follow the recommendations based on the new results.

SCRIPT #2

SCRIPT #2

**COVID-19 Recovery: Public Health and Infection Control Key Principles
Screening Scripts for Ambulatory Settings**

Updated: 15 May 2020

FOR IN-PERSON SCREENING AT SITE ENTRY POINTS

Note: please do not turn away any patients in need of medical attention. Anyone exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms are to be provided with a mask, asked to remove gloves and perform hand hygiene.

Welcome to (Clinic name).

We kindly ask everyone to keep two meters distance between each other.

If you are a family member or visitor and are exhibiting COVID-19 like symptoms such as fever and new cough, we kindly ask you do not enter the facility at this time to keep our patients and staff safe.

If you are a patient or client and are exhibiting COVID-19 like symptoms such as fever and new cough, or have been in contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case, you are required to wear a mask. If you do not have a mask, please come see of the greeters.

[NOTE TO GREETERS: please ensure you wearing appropriate PPE to ensure safe interactions with suspect COVID-19 patients.]

For all those entering the facility, please:

COVID-19-like Symptoms	No COVID-19 –like Symptoms
<p>Remove gloves if you are wearing any and perform hand hygiene.</p> <p>If you are not already wearing a mask please put one on now.</p> <p>[NOTE TO GREETERS: please provide masks to those with COVID-19 like symptoms. Patients with cloth or homemade masks should be given a new mask; if unsure provide patient with mask.</p>	<p>Remove gloves if you are wearing any and perform hand hygiene.</p>

Thank you for your cooperation.

SCRIPT #2

SCRIPT #3

**COVID-19 Recovery: Public Health and Infection Control Key Principles
Screening Scripts for Ambulatory Settings**

Updated: 15 May 2020

FOR IN-PERSON SCREENING AT DESIGNATED UNIT RECEPTION

Hello, Welcome to (Unit/Department Name). My name is (your name), can you please sanitize your hands first.

As part of our pre-screening process, we have a few questions we will need you to answer:

(NOTE TO CLERICAL STAFF: please reference the tables below and follow the appropriate the process outlined).

In the last 14 days, have you:

	No	Yes
Returned from travel outside of Canada?		
Been in close contact with anyone diagnosed with lab confirmed COVID-19?		
Lived or worked in a setting that is part of a COVID-19 outbreak?		
Been advised to self-isolate or quarantine at home by public health?		

Do you have new onset of any of the following symptoms:

	No	Yes
Fever		
Cough: new or worse than usual		
Shortness of breath		
Diarrhea		
Nausea and/or vomiting		
Headache		
Runny nose/nasal congestion		
Sore throat or painful swallowing		
Loss of sense of smell		
Loss of appetite		
Chills		
Muscle aches		
Fatigue		

SCRIPT #2

If NO – Proceed as follows	If YES to <u>any</u> of the questions– Proceed as follows
<p>NOTE TO CLERICAL STAFF: If patient responds no, and does not appear symptomatic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Request that the patient/client maintains physical distancing (if not wearing a mask) <input type="checkbox"/> Proceed as normal. 	<p>[NOTE TO CLERICAL STAFF: If patient responds yes, or appears symptomatic, follow this procedure.]</p> <p>Ensure that the patient is wearing a face mask already. If not, provide them with a face mask.</p> <p>Take the patient directly to the isolation/examination room. If no room is available, ask the patient to take a seat in designated area.</p> <p>Clean and disinfect the patient side of the clerical area using appropriate disinfectant wipes. Refer to VCH’s Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidelines.</p> <p>Notify physician/clinician that patient has arrived and is presenting with symptoms.</p>

Thank you for your cooperation.