

## MEMO

**Date:** March 3, 2020

**To:** Home Care and In-Home Health Care Leadership

**From:** Dr. Brent Roussin  
Chief Provincial Public Health Officer Lanette Siragusa,  
Provincial Lead, Health System Integration & Quality,  
Chief Nursing Officer, Shared Health

**Re:** COVID- 19 – Information for Home Health Care Providers

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The number of cases of COVID-19 is increasing outside China as the outbreak continues to evolve. This is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation. Manitoba public health officials continue to monitor, gather information, assess risk and recommend evidence based approaches for healthcare providers and precautions for returning travelers.

At this time, the risk associated with COVID-19 in Canada is low however all health regions are involved in a coordinated provincial planning and response effort.

Home Care and other in-home health services are reminded to ensure use of Droplet/Contact precautions, including:

- Consistent use of appropriate hand hygiene – wash hands with soap and warm water for at least 15 seconds and dry hands thoroughly. If your hands are not visibly dirty, you can use alcohol-based hand cleanser.
- Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including:
  - Masks (either surgical or procedure)
  - Eye protection (eye glasses are not considered eye protection)
    - Goggles
    - Safety glasses
    - Mask with a visor (eye protection) is also an option
  - Gloves: non-sterile, all sizes
  - Standard long-sleeved procedure gowns
  - N95 respirators if doing [Aerosol Generating Medical Procedures \(AGMPs\)](#)
- All medical equipment must be cleaned and disinfected/sterilized using healthcare grade products according to Routine Practices.

***Please ensure your office/site/program has a supply of all of these items for staff to use when entering the home with a COVID-19 Case(s).***

***Staff must be familiar with putting on and taking PPE off safely.***

If the person with COVID-19 requires an AGMP as part of their care, staff must wear an N95 respirator, (staff must have been FIT-tested for the N95), in addition to eye-protection, gloves and a gown.

If possible AGMP should be done in a room with the door closed away from other household members. Door to the room should remain closed.

#### Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 in the household

If there is a person in the home with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, even if the individual is NOT receiving care, all care-givers must follow Droplet/Contact Precautions for the entire visit.

Staff should request the person with COVID-19 remain in another part of the house (a minimum of 2 meters/6 feet away from the area of care) during the home visit.

#### Duration of Precautions

Precautions should continue until a joint decision to discontinue has been made by the Attending Physician and Infectious Diseases. Two consecutive negative tests for COVID-19, at least 24 hours apart, are required. Minimally this should be nasopharyngeal (NP) specimens, with consideration for both NP and throat swabs at all sampling times to maximize sensitivity for detecting the virus.

It is the responsibility of the person receiving services or their “responsible other” to notify Home Care/in-home services that precautions may be discontinued. The home should then be cleaned and disinfected according to Public Health guidance.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the IP&C measures outlined in this document please speak to your manager.