

This guideline provides direction for the use of the most appropriate resident and patient (client) transportation from Personal Care Homes, Transitional Care Centres and Acute Care Hospitals during COVID-19.

This transport guideline is limited to clients within a green zone.

EMS continues to support Interfacility Transportation according to eligibility criteria outlined within the Interfacility Transfers Procedure ([CLI.5310.PR.004](#)).

Family/alternate and public transportation can be used to facilitate client transportation, when appropriate and deemed required. Required travel includes but is not limited to specialist consultations, procedures, interim placement, dialysis and chemotherapy treatments.

Older people and those living with chronic and pre-existing medical conditions are more vulnerable to becoming severely ill when infected with the COVID-19 virus. The significant risk COVID-19 poses to the clients within a Personal Care Home and a Transitional Care Centre requires members of the health care team to evaluate the requirement for the client to access the service based on each client's care needs. For example: A follow-up appointment with a dentist where no issues exist or where the client's dentures are ill-fitting.

In determining the most appropriate method of transportation for the client, other factors and the following are considered:

- Is the client able to perform hand hygiene prior to entering the vehicle and minimize contact with internal surfaces during transport?
- Is the client able to wear a procedure mask during the full duration of the transportation?
- Is the client able to understand general Infection Prevention & Control precautions and required measures?

If the answer to the questions are "NO", the use of alternate transportation with an appropriate staff escort or EMS should be considered.

If the answer to the questions are "YES", family/alternate transportation is acceptable in accordance with the following guidelines.

Staff are required to have a good understanding of "COVID-19 Precautions During Transportation – Driver / Assistant Handout" and provide instructions to the family/alternate or public transportation driver on all requirements.

### **Family/alternate transportation:**

#### **Pre-transport**

The family member/alternate is notified of the requirement for transportation. Depending on client needs and requirements to access the destination, a maximum of two individuals may be approved to facilitate the transportation.

The family member/alternate is informed of the screening criteria and requirements:

- Pre-screening will occur prior to the appointment by phone.
- Screening will be conducted at point-of-entry to the facility on the day of transportation.
- Transportation is to be facilitated by the pre-approved individuals only.
- The transportation is to be limited to access the required service and then to return following, to mitigate risk of COVID-19 transmission to the client, themselves and facility occupants.
- The family/alternate is/are required to wear a procedure mask that is provided by the facility.

Provide “COVID-19 Precautions During Transportation – Driver/Assistant Handout” to the family/alternate(s) to review prior to the scheduled transport.

#### Pre-appointment

Call the family/alternate to pre-screen using the current visitor screening questions. Should screening criteria not be met, the appointment will be rescheduled, if appropriate to do so. In circumstances of required medical services, and it is not reasonable to reschedule the appointment, alternate transportation with an appropriate staff escort or Interfacility Transfer by EMS may be considered.

#### Upon arrival at the facility

1. The family/alternate is not to enter beyond the point-of-entry screening location. Staff conducts point-of-entry screening. Should screening criteria not be met, the appointment will be rescheduled, if appropriate to do so. In circumstances of required medical services, and it is not reasonable to reschedule the appointment, Interfacility Transfer by EMS may be considered.
2. Staff review the “COVID-19 Precautions During Transportation” document with the family/alternate in detail.
3. In event that the appointment and transportation occur during a meal period, arrangements are to be made as the client is not to enter a public area/restaurant, this includes:
  - feeding the client prior to departure,
  - providing a bagged meal,
  - accessing a drive-thru or
  - engaging with the family/alternate prior to the scheduled appointment with other suitable arrangements

Any food arrangements must align with client allergies and texture requirements.
4. Provide the driver (family/alternate) with:
  - 1-2 procedure mask per person (driver and assistant),
  - 1 sheet or plastic bag to cover the seat to be used by the client,
  - 3 disinfectant wipes to wash the inside of the vehicle door and surfaces i.e., dash, console, where the client may touch
  - 1 bag to return the sheet and
  - 1 trash bag for the wipes and PPE
5. The client is assisted with hand washing, donning a mask and is brought to the point-of-entry for transportation. Infection Prevention & Control measures and overall instructions are reviewed with the client aligning with their ability to understand and comply.

#### Upon arrival to final destination or return to originating facility

The client is instructed/assisted with hand hygiene and doffing the mask (and with hand hygiene if mask was removed independently) prior to returning the client to their room.

Collect the sheet used to cover the seat applying required Infection Prevention & Control precautions.

**Use of Public Transportation (taxi, handivan/other):**

The client and driver are to wash their hands. Staff provide the driver with a procedure mask and instructions on how to don the mask and to wear the mask during the entire transportation.

The client is assisted with donning a procedure mask and instructed to maintain same during the entire transportation and until instructed otherwise.

**Upon arrival to final destination or return to originating facility**

The client is instructed/assisted with hand hygiene and doffing the mask and with hand hygiene if mask was removed independently prior to returning the client to their room.