

June 5 2020

# Ambulatory Clinic Recommendations During COVID-19

## General

- Review the outpatient clinic area, including examination spaces
  - Remove all extraneous objects or surplus of supplies
  - Minimal supplies can remain in the clinic rooms but should be protected behind closed cupboards/in drawers or remain greater than 2m from the patient
  - Supplies should always be accessed with clean hands
  - To facilitate clean hands to clean supplies, ensure adequate and convenient access to alcohol-based hand rub wherever clean supplies are stored
  - Ensure furniture is in good condition, easily cleanable and non-absorbent
- Remove all books, magazines, and toys from the waiting room
- Review and modify the clinic area to adhere to physical distancing guidelines. Floor markings may be required at reception. Waiting areas should be arranged to keep patients 2 metres apart, preferably by removing chairs, or blocking chairs using signage
- When possible, care providers are encouraged to conduct virtual/telephone consultations

## Screening & Signage

- All patients and essential visitors are required to be screened over the telephone 48 to 72 hours prior to their appointment
- All individuals entering the organization are being screened upon entrance to the building so there are no specific screening signage requirements for outpatient areas at this time
- Signs should be posted to remind patients and visitors to perform hand hygiene
- Ensure clinic has a sufficient supply of Additional Precautions signs and in particular, Droplet + Contact Precautions, for suspect or confirmed cases of COVID-19 or other patients with an acute respiratory illness (signs can be ordered via [Forms Management](#)).

## Reception

- Reception barriers are installed to protect those behind the barrier from patients who have NOT been screened for an acute respiratory illness, including COVID-19
- Clinics without a reception barrier should contact their Safety Analyst for assessment
- Ensure patient access to alcohol-based hand rub
- Limit the exchange of items between staff and patients. If exchange is required, shared items, such as a pen, must be disinfected after each use. Staff must perform hand hygiene after touching a patient belonging (e.g. health card, prescription, money etc.)

## Patient Flow

- Patients in an outpatient clinic should be reminded to travel directly to and from their clinic location. They should not spend any more time than necessary in the building
- Appointments should be booked to minimize waiting room time

- Patients presenting to the organization with signs and symptoms of COVID-19 or an acute respiratory illness should be wearing a mask and immediately triaged to a private room
- If a patient requires Additional Precautions, appropriate signage should be posted and required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) worn

### Patient Masking

- Current masking protocols require universal masking for the patient population, and are distributed at the perimeter screening locations.
- Patients that fail any COVID-19 screening questions but must attend their medical appointment will be provided with a **surgical mask** when they enter the building.
- If a patient/visitor arrives wearing a personal mask, and have passed the perimeter screening, they can continue to do so

### Visitors/Companions

- [Visitor restrictions](#) are currently in place
- If an essential visitor has been approved, the visitor must
  - Pass the screening criteria at the visitor entrance and be approved for entry
  - Wear a current ID badge while in hospital
  - Wear a mask as directed by the screening desk
  - Remain with the patient for the entire visit or in a space designated by the clinical team if a procedure requires it

### Environmental Cleaning

- Shared spaces, such as waiting rooms, will continue to be cleaned by Sodexo according to best practice recommendations.
- Patient care spaces, such as examination rooms, will continue to be cleaned after each patient according to best practice recommendations. This includes cleaning of all horizontal surfaces within 2 meters of the patient, and any equipment and furnishings used during the visit (e.g. exam table, chair, BP cuff, thermometer, WOW)
- Ensure compliance with the [LHSC Standard Wiping Protocol](#), which requires wiping of shared patient equipment (e.g. blood pressure cuff, thermometer, etc.) with a hospital approved disinfectant wipe
- Due to supply challenges, your clinical area may be stocked with a disinfectant wipe that requires either a 1 minute OR a 3 minute contact time – be aware of and observe product instructions

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Clinic staff must utilize PPE as indicated by [Universal Masking, PPE Guidance and PPE Conservation strategies](#).
- PPE requirements specific to COVID-19 are available on the [COVID-19 Diseases & Conditions website](#).
- Additional PPE may be required based on the patient's clinical presentation.

- Staff must complete a Point of Care Risk Assessment (PCRA) prior to every patient interaction to determine PPE requirements.
- Resources for [donning and doffing PPE](#) are available.

#### Aerosol-generating medical procedures (AGMPs)

- Clinics that routinely perform AGMPs must review the requirements outlined on the [COVID-19 Diseases and Conditions](#) page to ensure standards are met, including appropriate room type, PPE and signage.