

Renew Health: Communicable Disease Plan

Purpose:

- To ensure that Renew Health can respond quickly and appropriately to new or seasonal communicable diseases.
- Outline actions to reduce the risk of exposure, both for clients and the practitioners, to communicable diseases
- Maintaining compliance with WorkSafe BC and Public Health expectations

Communicable Disease Defined

A communicable disease is an illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxic product that can be transmitted in a workplace from one person to another. Examples of communicable diseases that way circulate in a workplace include COVID-19, norovirus, and seasonal influenza.

The level of risk of certain communicable diseases may increase from time to time or on a seasonal basis. This may occur at a local or regional level, or within a certain workplace.

Overview

1. The foundational elements of this communicate disease prevention include:Required ongoing assessment for signs of communicable diseases (and COVID-19 related illness) in both the client and the practitioner as advised by the Ministry of Health and the local Public Health Office
2. Physical distancing in waiting rooms and other high traffic areas, as necessary
3. Hand hygiene requirements
4. Avoiding face touching
5. Maintaining a clean work environment
6. Proper ventilation
7. Appropriate use of Public Health Measures (PHM), which refers to the use of non-surgical masks
8. Meeting professional obligations, particularly related to informed consent and liability insurance
9. Informed Consent

1. Assessment for Communicable Diseases: For Clients & Practitioners

Pre-Screening/Prior to Arrival

- Clients will be informed about their responsibilities at the time of booking. A notice will be placed on the online booking outlining their responsibility to complete the BC COVID-19 Assessment tool prior to their appointment.
- The practitioner will use the BC COVID-19 Assessment tool daily and commits to cancelling all appointments if symptoms appear.
- Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses and seasonal allergies. An appointment must be cancelled immediately if either the client or the practitioners presents with any new and unexplained/unusual symptoms, even if they are mild, that may be signs of COVID-19 including:
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Chills
 - Shortness of breath
 - Sore throat or pain with swallowing
 - Stuffy or runny nose, in combination with any other symptoms(s)
 - Loss of sense of smell
 - Headache
 - Muscle aches
 - Fatigue
 - Loss of appetite
- As a part of consent to treatment, clients must commit to understanding that while we've taken all possible measures to minimize risk of viral transmission, the nature of the therapy means that physical distancing is not possible in the treatment room.
- In order for a treatment to commence, the practitioner and client must agree that the therapeutic benefit of the treatment outweighs any potential consequence of treatment, including the possibility of viral transmission.
- Clients and Practitioners must confirm that they have not been in contact with anyone with a confirmed case of COVID-19, or anyone awaiting results of COVID-19 diagnostic testing within 14 days prior to their treatment. In these instances treatments must be cancelled/postponed.
- Clients and Practitioners must confirm if they have been in contact with anyone displaying symptoms of COVID-19 within 14 days prior to their treatment. In these instances treatments may need to be cancelled/postponed.
- Clients with higher risk profiles and/or weakened immune systems should consider alternatives for care and postpone treatment.
- Clients and Practitioners who develop even mild illness or unusual symptoms should cancel booked appointments, even without notice.
- Practitioners will cancel any booked appointments if advised to do so by the Provincial Health Officer at any time.
- Clients will not be charged a late cancellation fee if they cancel due to illness.

Upon Arrival

- The practitioner will advise clients of their current Self-Assessment results upon their arrival at the clinic. Clients will be asked to share their own results.
- Upon arrival clients must confirm that they have no signs of COVID-19 as outlined here: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/symptoms>
- By order of the Provincial Health Officer (PHO) masks are mandated in public indoor settings. The following people are exempt:
 - People with health conditions or with physical, cognitive or mental impairments who cannot wear one
 - People who cannot remove a mask on their own
 - Children under the age of 5
 - People who need to remove their masks to communicate due to another person's hearing impairment
- A client may be refused entry or service if they do not wear a mask
- The treatment will be cancelled immediately if the client does not meet the pre-screening criteria upon physical presentation at the clinic.

Ongoing Assessment

- Renew Health practitioners will monitor and review communicable disease-related information issued by the regional medical health officer or the PHO, as it relates to our workplace operation, industry and/or region on a monthly basis. This includes orders, guidance, notices, and recommendations. Information will be reviewed routinely at:
 - Island Health: <http://www.islandhealth.ca/>
 - Office of the PHO: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer>
 - BC Center of Disease Control Reportable Disease Dashboard: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/data-reports/reportable-diseases-data-dashboard>
 - Health Canada Flu Watch Surveillance: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/flu-influenza/influenza-surveillance.html>
- Adaptations to this plan will be incorporated as required based on emerging Public Health information and input from the workplace stakeholders.

2. Physical Distancing

Reception Area/Entry into Clinic Space

- Clients must arrive unaccompanied, with the exception of a guardian for minors, or care providers for clients with disabilities.
- All parties will maintain a space of two meters (six feet) distance between each other in all clinic areas outside the treatment room
- Clients will be instructed to arrive on time for their appointments and should be discouraged from lounging in the clinic reception area before or after the treatment.
- The clinic door will remain propped open during clinic hours.

Within the Clinic Common Areas (Kitchen & Laundry Room)

- Maximum of six practitioners in clinic premises at all times; practitioner shifts are staggered to minimize contact with other practitioners both before and after shifts and in between client appointments.
- Masks are required in all shared work areas and areas where physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Restroom

- The restroom is maintained by the landlord and is equipped with the proper hand washing guidelines.
- Soap and fresh paper towels for drying will be available at all times.
- A waste bin has been placed next to the restroom door so that people may use a paper towel to open the door, and then discard it before re-entering the clinic space.

3. Hand Hygiene

Reception Area/Entry into Clinic Space

- Immediately upon entering the clinic space there will be hand sanitizer available.
- Practitioners will wash hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds between clients, before and after disinfecting spaces, before donning or doffing masks, and after touching soiled laundry, equipment, and delivery items.
- Hand washing protocols will be posted visibly at all sinks.
- Payment occurs in the reception area. Clients can provide credit card details to be kept within our secure system or use Point of Sale (POS) systems with Tap. The POS machine will be sanitized between each client.

In the Treatment Room

- The practitioner will open the door to the treatment room and allow the client to enter. The practitioner will open/close the door before, during, and after the treatment as required reducing the need for the client to touch the door.
 - Clients will be permitted to open the door for themselves after the treatment to let themselves out of the treatment room.
 - Tissue is available inside the treatment room that the clients may use as a barrier when opening the door.
 - Hand sanitizer is available within the treatment room; clients will be asked to wash or sanitize their hands after the treatment.
 - The door and doorknobs will be disinfected between each client.

4. Avoid Face Touching

- Tissue will be available throughout the clinic: in the reception area, treatment room, back office, and hallway in order that clients and practitioners may use tissue to address an itch and/or touch the face for any other reason.

- The practitioner will wear a mask at all times and avoid touching and readjusting after it is in place.
- Clients are required to wear face masks that cover both the nose and mouth at all times.

5. Maintaining a Clean Work Environment

- Time has been allocated between clients to allow for cleaning of the treatment room.
- Soiled surfaces will be cleaned followed by disinfection with a Canada Health disinfectant as listed here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>
- Practitioners will be made aware of contact times for all disinfecting agents.
- A cleaning check-list/tracking schedule for high touch surfaces will be in the reception area and will be completed three times a day.
- All high touch surfaces within the treatment room will be cleaned and disinfected between clients. These surfaces include (but are not limited to): the treatment table, table levers, face cradle, and lotion/oil bottles.
- No thermophores, table warmers, or table covers will be used without the use of a vinyl covering which can be cleaned and disinfected between each use.
- All lines, including blankets and pillow cases re single use only and will be laundered using detergent between each use.

6. Proper Ventilation

- Renew Health will verify that the property manager is conducting routine preventative maintenance to ensure that the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are operating as designed, and will report any issues for immediate remedy.
- HEPA-filtration of air in the treatment room may be helpful if the room has no windows or external air exchange. Use of an air filter is at the RMT's preference and discretion.

7. Personal Protective Equipment/ Public Health Measures

- The practitioner will wear a face mask at all times in the clinic.
- Clients are required to wear a mask in the clinic and will be provided one if needed.
- Medical gowns are not required to be worn by the practitioner, but are permitted if a practitioner so chooses.
- Non-latex gloves may be worn by the practitioner at the client's request or for cleaning. If gloves are worn, the practitioner must wash their hands before putting on the gloves and immediately after removing them.
- References:
 - <http://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks/about-non-medical-masks-face-coverings.html#a8>
 - http://www.bccdc.ca/.../Mask_Use_Health_Care_Facilities.pdf

8. Professional Obligations

Liability Insurance

- All practitioners are required to carry their own professional liability insurance.
- The practitioners of the clinic are following all the health and safety guidelines outlined by their respective College(s) and the PHO, and they are taking all reasonable precautions to clean and disinfect the clinic and all the surfaces within the treatment room.
- The practitioners of the clinic will refrain from being present in the clinic if advised to do so by the PHO for any reason.
- No guarantees have been made by the therapist, that the client may not come in contact with COVID-19 or other communicable diseases at or during an appointment.

In the event that a client discloses testing positive for COVID-19 having been to an appointment within the 14-days prior to onset of symptoms, the practitioner in question will call Public Health at 8-1-1 to report the possible transmission and act on the direction of Provincial Health.

In the event that a practitioner has been exposed to an individual with a confirmed positive COVID-19 test, the individual will self-isolate as directed by the PHO and be tested as directed by the PHO.

In the event that a client alleges they caught COVID-19 from the practitioner, the practitioner will immediately call public health at 8-1-1 to report the alleged transmission providing both the name of the practitioners and the name and contact details of the client. The client must agree to the release of this information in order to receive treatment. The practitioner will self isolate and get tested on the direction of the PHO.

Asymptomatic Spreaders

- Asymptomatic transmission of the coronavirus is an unavoidable risk of practice until herd immunity is achieved, and/or there is an effective treatment or vaccine against COVID-19.
- We have put into place protocols to help mitigate that risk as outlined in the preceding documentation.

9. Informed Consent

- In the current environment of COVID-19 risk, informed consent requires that the client be informed and understands that:
 - Any treatment involves some risk of COVID-19 transmission
 - The practitioner is following protocol to help reduce or mitigate risk where possible but that risk cannot be reduced to zero
 - The client consents to the treatment despite some risk
 - The practitioner will document the client's consent in advance and at every treatment