

Protocol for In-Person Clinic Visits During the COVID-19 Pandemic

V6 2020-July-21

1. Virtual care will be offered and encouraged except in those cases in which direct physical contact with the patient is necessary.
2. Beginning 2020-June-29, the clinic will be open for business as usual.
 - a. The front door of the building will be unlocked 0830-1800.
 - b. The elevator will remain unlocked when building is open
 - c. Staff will be expected to attend the clinic unless they have specific concerns for their safety or wellbeing and complete appropriate waiver form.
3. Because of the possibility of asymptomatic infections, precautions must be taken as if everyone we encounter could be carrying the virus.
4. Staff will be informed that they are not allowed to attend the clinic if they are ill in any way, if they show symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or if they have been in contact in the past two weeks with anyone who has suspected or diagnosed COVID-19. Should this occur, the following precautions will be taken:
 - a. Contact tracing: All staff present in the clinic will also be tested for COVID-19.
 - b. Self-isolate: All staff members present that day will self-isolate until the test results are available.
 - c. If results are negative, all staff will return to work.
 - d. If the results are positive, concerned staff members will continue to self-isolate X10 days.
5. A maximum of 6 patients can be brought into the clinic simultaneously.
 - a. This number assumes that patients will be escorted immediately to examination rooms, as described below.
 - b. In all circumstances, it is essential to avoid contact between patients and to minimize contact between patients and staff.
 - c. Where possible, timing of visits will be coordinated to minimize the number of patients present in the clinic.
6. Where possible, patients who are elderly or otherwise especially at-risk will be scheduled so as to minimize the probability of contact with other patients.
7. A distance of 2m will be maintained between staff members and between staff members and patients, except when physical contact is medically necessary.
8. At the request of TPMG Capital, our building management company, we will try to limit patient visits during the “rush hour” periods of 8-10 AM

and 4-6 PM. If possible, patient appointments will be made to avoid these periods.

9. In no instance will more than 2 people be in the elevator at one time.
10. Wait time will be minimized
 - a. Visits will be scheduled at specific times and patients will be met by their Case Manager immediately following pre-screening.
 - b. The waiting area will be set up with appropriate signage to indicate where patients should wait in order to maintain 2 m spacing between people.
11. Cleaning and disinfection will be carried out regularly.
 - a. The office, including washrooms and elevator, will be cleaned and sanitized prior to each business day.
 - b. All high-contact surfaces in offices and washrooms will be disinfected using an appropriate antiviral disinfectant at least twice each day.
 - c. Examination rooms and any other areas where patients could contact surfaces (e.g., washrooms and elevator) will be disinfected regularly using isopropanol or other antiviral disinfectant. Examination rooms will be sanitized between patients (see below).
 - d. Use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and careful hand sanitization is required for both staff and patients, regardless of cleaning measures.
 - e. In order to reduce the probability of contamination and subsequent infections, all dishes and utensils used in the kitchen, including cups and spoons used to make coffee will be washed with appropriate detergent in the dishwasher at the end of each business day.

Primary Screening. Patients will be screened carefully to minimize the risk of exposure to patients and staff.

- f. MOA will phone patients when office visits are warranted.
 - i. Patient will be asked “Do you feel safe and comfortable coming into the clinic for a visit?”
 1. If “yes”, continue.
 2. If “no”, set up virtual appointment
 - ii. Patients will be directed to handout of on-site visit protocol at BCDiabetes.ca.
 - iii. MOA will enquire whether patient will be accompanied by companion. She will explain that only one support person can be accommodated with the patient because of limited space in examination rooms.
 - iv. Explain to patient the need for staggering arrival times to ensure maintenance of physical distancing for everyone’s safety.
 - v. Patients will be asked to arrive as close to appointed time as possible.

- vi. Explain to patient that they will be met at the elevator by an MOA, and will be escorted to an exam room by a Case Manager immediately upon arrival at the clinic.
- vii. Explain that only two at a time, or one patient and their companion, can be brought up in the elevator.
- g. Patient will be asked the following screening questions:
 - i. Have you traveled outside the province in the past two weeks?
 - ii. Have you been in contact during the past two weeks with anyone who is known or suspected to have COVID-19 or who has had symptoms of the disease?
 - iii. Have you experienced one or more of the following symptoms:
 - 1. shortness of breath
 - 2. fever
 - 3. cough (new or changes to an existing cough)
 - 4. runny nose
 - 5. loss of the sense of smell or taste
 - iv. Have you been in contact with other people who have any of these symptoms?
- h. If “yes” to any of these questions:
 - i. If patient has symptoms, suggest they call 811 to seek medical advice
 - ii. Set up virtual appointment with the Case Manager with whom the patient was originally scheduled as soon as possible for follow-up.
- i. If “no” to all these questions, remind patient about BC Diabetes on-site visit protocol (at BCDiabetes.ca) , and schedule clinic visit.

12. On-site Visit Protocol

- a. The following signage and logs will be maintained:
 - i. Sign at front door with phone number for Dr. Samuel’s extension
 - ii. Sign at elevator indicating that not more than two people are allowed in the elevator
 - iii. A sign will be placed on each washroom door indicating that only one person at a time should be in the washroom.
- b. Traffic flow in the clinic
 - i. No more than 6 patients can be allowed into the clinic at one time.
 - ii. Each patient (and companion, if present) will be met at the elevator by an MOA.
 - 1. Patient (and companion) will be provided with masks, and MOA will insist that patient wears mask
 - 2. Hand sanitizer will be supplied, and patient will be asked to clean their hands.

3. Patient (and companion) will be escorted directly to the examination room immediately upon arrival.
- c. The following PPE and other equipment will be provided:
 - i. Surgical masks
 - ii. Face shields/masks with shields
 - iii. Gowns (paper, plastic or cloth, including improvised garments)
 - iv. Hand sanitizer available in all rooms of clinic, washrooms and elevator. (Hand sanitizer should have either DIN or NPN number)
 - v. Disposable plastic covers for chairs in examination rooms
 - vi. Gloves
 - vii. Pulse Oximeter to check patients' O₂ saturation
 - d. Use of PPE:
 - i. All staff will wear surgical masks at all times, unless they are working alone at their work station.
 - ii. Both staff and patients will be asked to sanitize hands prior to beginning visit.
 - iii. Gloves
 1. Gloves will be optional except during procedures such as blood draws, lab work, etc., when gloves would ordinarily be used.
 2. Note that the use of gloves does not eliminate need for routine hand washing/sanitization.
 3. Gloves should be removed immediately after contact with patient or with instruments, etc., used in contact with patient, to avoid contamination of surfaces.
 4. Gloves will be removed when leaving exam room, or when coming into contact with computers, notebooks, etc., to avoid contamination.
 5. Hands will be sanitized immediately upon removal of gloves.
 - iv. A gown will be worn if procedure could expose Case Manager to potentially infectious materials.
 - v. Direct patient to use hand sanitizer upon arrival in clinic.
 - vi. Provide the patient with a surgical mask and require them to wear it.
 - vii. Sanitize the examination chair and all other contact surfaces in the examination room with 70% isopropanol or other antiviral disinfectant. Sanitize all contact surfaces in the examination room.
 - viii. Optional: cover exam room chair with a fresh plastic sheet prior to each patient encounter.
 - e. The following screening questions will be repeated:
 - i. Have you traveled outside the province in the past two weeks?

- ii. During the past two weeks, have you been in contact with anyone who is known or suspected to have COVID-19 or who has had symptoms of the disease?
- iii. Have you experienced one or more of the following symptoms:
 - 1. shortness of breath
 - 2. fever
 - 3. cough (new, or changes to an existing cough)
 - 4. runny nose
 - 5. loss of sense of smell or taste
- iv. Have you been in contact with other people who have any of these symptoms?
- f. If “yes” to any of these questions, STOP VISIT
 - i. Ask the patient to leave the building, return home and call 811 if they are symptomatic.
 - ii. Ask patient to call clinic subsequently to book a virtual visit
- g. If “no” to all questions, proceed with visit
- h. Visit
 - i. Use all PPE as described above.
 - ii. Complete medical tasks.
 - iii. When tasks are complete, ask the patient to sanitize their hands.
 - iv. Case manager should remove and discard their gloves, if worn, and sanitize hands.
- 13. Escort the patient to the elevator.
 - a. See that the patient leaves the building.
 - b. The Case Manager should then remove and discard their mask, using appropriate aseptic technique. Replace with a new mask prior to the next patient encounter.
- 14. Prepare exam room for next patient
 - a. Remove and discard plastic sheeting if used to cover the chair.
 - b. Sanitize the chair and any other surfaces touched during the visit, including instruments such as oximeter, stethoscope, and other equipment such as the computer keyboard, mouse, pens, etc.
 - c. Practice good hand hygiene after cleaning the exam room.

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