PPE Distribution Process to Community Specialist Physicians

This document outlines the PPE distribution process for all specialist physicians working in community (non-AHS) settings. Community specialist physicians may include:

- Ophthalmologists
- Surgeons
- Radiologists
- Internal medicine specialists
- Rheumatologists
- Others

AHS is distributing personal protective equipment (PPE) for use by community specialist physicians. As critical partners in the management of COVID-19, the role of community specialist physicians in caring for Albertans is well recognized and understood.

Please note PPE distribution processes to the following groups has NOT changed. If you are a member of one of the groups below, follow the link for information on PPE distribution relevant to you:

- PCN primary care physicians
- Non-PCN primary care physicians
- Obstetricians, gynecologists and pediatricians
- Physicians working in AHS or contracted facilities (contact your local CPSM Site Services Supervisor)

Physicians from these groups may contact their regular PPE distribution point of contact or phc@ahs.ca with questions.

Key Points:

- There are standardized provincial processes to ensure equity and appropriateness of PPE distribution. Although AHS is confident in its PPE supply, there is a limited amount and we must ensure highest risk areas are supplied
- Every effort should be made to conserve supplies and clinicians must only order what they require for a week at a time based on current PPE guidance
- PPE must be closely monitored and not be left out in public spaces
- We appreciate your judicious use of supplies to ensure availability across the system for the duration of the pandemic
- When possible, encourage COVID-19 symptomatic patients to complete the online self-assessment at ahs.ca/covid or call 811 to be referred for testing, if appropriate
NEW PPE process for community specialist physicians
Community specialist physicians should no longer contact the Provincial Emergency Social Services (PESS) or AHS Contracting, Procurement and Supply Management (CPSM) to request PPE.

Community specialist physicians will now receive PPE through this process:

1. PPE supplies
   - Available PPE supplies during the COVID-19 pandemic include:
     - **PPE for provider when caring for patient with influenza like illness (ILI) symptoms or confirmed/suspect COVID-19:** Provider wears procedure mask, face shield, gown and gloves (contact/droplet precautions)
     - **PPE for provider caring for asymptomatic patient:** Provider wears procedure mask (continuous masking)
     - **PPE for patient with ILI symptoms or confirmed/suspect COVID-19:** Patient wears procedure mask
     - **PPE for patient without ILI symptoms:** Patient does not wear any PPE
   - N95 respirators may be requested when an Aerosol Generating Medical Procedure is required and proof of current fit test
   - Physicians should increase the use of virtual care options and limit physical examinations to only the most necessary cases, in the interest of public health and the safety of patients, themselves and other healthcare workers
   - To receive PPE, community specialist physicians must answer yes to these questions based on CPSA position statement on public health recommendations:
     - Your clinic is engaging in essential/urgent patient procedures and visits
     - Your clinic is open during the COVID-19 pandemic
     - Your clinic is following recommended CPSA physical distancing practices
     - Your clinic is following recommended CPSA virtual care practices
     - Your clinic is following continuous masking guidelines

2. Process for distribution of PPE to community specialist physicians
   - Zone points of contact:
     - South Zone: SZMA.COVID@ahs.ca
     - Calgary Zone: ZEOC.Calgary.Logistics@ahs.ca
     - Central Zone: MedicalAffairs.CZInfoandAlerts@ahs.ca
     - Edmonton Zone: ZEOC.Edmonton.logisticsPPE@ahs.ca
     - North Zone: your local Primary Care Network (PCN)
Co-located community specialist physicians must batch orders together then contact their zone point of contact who will arrange for distribution through zonal processes.

You may not receive all the supplies you request and alternate options should be considered.

Orders should be based on average weekly usage, see scenario below for guidance on how much PPE to request.

Requests will be reviewed and allocated based on availability of supplies. AHS reserves the right to limit quantities shipped.

AHS will process requests on a zonal weekly schedule; emergency orders will be accommodated on a case by case basis.

All shipments will be by courier; no pick-ups are allowed.

3. PPE guidance

- Only patients with ILI symptoms should wear procedure masks in clinics.
- Staff should wear procedure masks at all times and in all areas of their workplace if they are involved in direct patient contact or cannot maintain adequate social distancing from patients and coworkers.
- Procedure masks should be immediately changed and disposed of when soiled, wet or contaminated and after care for any patient with suspected or confirmed influenza like illness or COVID-19.
- Follow infection prevention and control (IPC) protocols including hand hygiene and the use of additional PPE when delivering patient care.
- Follow donning and doffing guidance.
- Face shields, gowns and gloves should not be worn continuously.

4. How much PPE do I request?

Review the standard scenario below to calculate how much PPE to request:

- Despite changing your practice to virtual care wherever possible, if you see about 20 patients face to face per day, you should wear a procedure mask continuously and change it as per the PPE guidance.
- If about 5 of your patients/day typically have ILI symptoms, the patient requires a procedure mask and you need a new procedure mask.
- Given the PPE guidance, this means that you would need about 13 procedure masks, 5 gowns, 5 face shields and 5 sets of gloves per day.
- If you work in a community setting 5 days/week, you would need about 65 procedure masks, 25 face shields, 25 gowns and 25 sets of gloves.
- To calculate the amount of PPE you should request, you would further multiply this by the number of clinic staff who would also be required to attend to the patient(s) and meet the PPE guidance.
Note: You should attempt to limit the number of clinic staff directly interacting with patients with ILI symptoms to those who are required for safe clinical care.

For more information
To request PPE for your clinic contact your designated PPE point of contact
For COVID-19 information for community providers access www.ahs.ca/covidPHC
For PPE information and resources access www.ahs.ca/covidPPE