PPE Distribution Processes to non-PCN Primary Care Providers

This document was originally distributed on March 17, 2020 and has been updated to include information on Vert-2-Go-Saber™ disinfectant, criteria to receive PPE and specifications on PPE and cleaning products you may receive.

AHS is allocating personal protective equipment (PPE) and small amounts of cleaning supplies to primary care physician clinics who are not members of a Primary Care Network (PCN). Distribution is being coordinated by PCN hubs.

As critical partners in the management of COVID-19, your role in Alberta’s response is well-recognized and understood.

Please note this memo is only for primary care physicians who are not members of a PCN. PCN clinics can get information in this PPE distribution document.

Key Points:

- As healthcare services reopen, we appreciate your judicious use of supplies to ensure availability across the system for the duration of the pandemic. AHS is asking that physicians use clinical judgement to determine which services are considered “reasonable” to avoid diminishing crucial PPE resources
- 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
- Distribution of appropriate PPE and small amounts of cleaning supplies to primary care clinics will be organized provincially and operationalized zonally
- A PCN hub and spoke model has been developed that will be used to support distribution of PPE to primary care clinics
- 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
- 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
- Clinics should contact their local PCN or Zone Emergency Operations Centre (ZEOC) for guidance on how primary care should manage and test patients with COVID-19 symptoms in their zone
- Tele-advice lines are available for primary care providers in Alberta. Providers can phone for specialist advice on caring for presumed and confirmed COVID-19 patients who are recovering at home
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 (AGMP) is required and proof of current fit test. Use the AGMP look-up tool to determine which procedures are considered to be aerosol-generating
  - Available cleaning supplies include: Vert-2-Go-Saber™ (one-litre, ready-to-use, disinfectant product) and disposable dry wipes for use in your location for environmental cleaning. Vert-2-Go-Saber is a ready-to-use product. It is different than Cavi Wipes because it has to be squeezed onto a dry wipe or surface; however, it does not require mixing or dilution and is effective against COVID-19. Please see Appendix 1 for use instructions
  - Clinics may also request small amounts of hand sanitizer
  - As AHS continues to source supplies from various vendors, you may receive different products depending on availability. However, all products will meet safety requirements. See Appendix 1 for more information on specifications for PPE and cleaning items as well as instructions for how to use products
  - 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

2. Criteria to receive PPE

To receive PPE, community physicians must follow current guidance from the CPSA and Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health on providing services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Process for distribution of PPE

- Seven PCNs are the geographic hubs for distribution to primary care clinics who are not members of PCNs
- Non-PCN primary care providers (NPPCP) have been notified of seven zonal PCN points of contact (contact phc@ahs.ca if you are unsure of your contact)
- If NPPCP requires PPE, they should contact their PCN hub
- NPPCP will be screened by PCN point of contact to ensure they meet criteria
• PCN point of contact will determine amount and method of distribution based on available supplies and zonal model
• PCN hub arranges for distribution of PPE to NPPCP
• You may not receive all the supplies you request due to limited supplies and alternate options should be considered. Thank you for your understanding as we continue to allocate supplies based on availability
  o Refer to FAQs for Community Physicians for options if cleaning supplies or hand sanitizer are not available

4. 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

5. 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 PCN point of contact (email phc@ahs.ca if you don’t know your contact)
Primary care information on COVID-19: www.ahs.ca/covidphc
PPE information and resources: www.ahs.ca/covidPPE
Questions about distribution process: phc@ahs.ca
Appendix 1: Minimum Specifications and Instructions for PPE and Cleaning Products

The table below lists the safety requirements for PPE and cleaning products you may receive. Specific name brands or specific requests will be supplied based on availability.

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<tr>
<th>PPE or Cleaning Item</th>
<th>What to expect</th>
<th>How to use/ additional supplies</th>
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| **Disposable gowns** | • Gowns will have closure at the neck and waist, cover majority of back, extend below the knees and offer fluid resistance  
• Brands and styles may vary based on availability | Donning and doffing guidance  
Contact droplet precautions  
Interim IPC Recommendations for COVID-19 |
| **Procedure masks** | • May have ear loop or surgical ties  
• May be indicated as procedural or surgical  
• May be various colors, most often blue or white  
• Brands and styles may vary based on availability  
• May add pediatric masks to “other” field on order form | Use the AGMP look-up tool to determine which procedures are considered to be aerosol-generating |
| **N95 respirators** | • Proof of current fit testing and description of aerosol-generating medical procedure (AGMP) is required  
• AHS cannot guarantee availability of N95 respirator brands to match community fit testing | |
| **Face shields** | • May have a foam headrest with elastic securement  
• May have a hard plastic frame with foam padding and elastic securement  
• Most will come with plastic shield attached, some may require you to attach to the frame  
• Brands and styles may vary based on availability  
• Goggles, safety glasses and other shield replacements are not available | |
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| Gloves               | • Available gloves meet a minimum requirement for medical grade nitrile gloves  
                       • Latex free are not available  
                       • Sizes small, medium and large are available  
                       • Sizes extra small and extra-large may be added to “other” section on form  
                       • Color, brand and styles may vary based on availability  
                       • Order by number of gloves, i.e., 400 EACH (2 BX) | |
| Hand sanitizer       | • All provided products meet minimum specifications of 60-80 per cent ethanol or isopropanol depending on the brand name and active ingredients  
                       • Brand and bottle size may vary, either 400 ml or 500 ml | Use as directed |
| Clean                | • Disinfectant wipes such as CAVI wipes are not available due to limited supplies  
                       • A ready-to-use disinfectant, Vert-2-Go-Saber, and dry wipes will be automatically substituted for any disinfectant requests  
                       • The product is a virucidal effective against COVID-19  
                       • Order by one-litre bottles (wipes included) | How to use Vert-2-Go-Saber disinfectant, which is effective against COVID-19:  
• It is ready-to-use and does not require mixing or dilution  
• The container is disposable. Discard when empty  
• Use according to manufacturer’s instructions  
• Saturate the wipe, squeeze out excess and apply to the hard surface – either dispense the liquid onto the surface or directly onto the wipe  
• Can be used both as a cleaner and disinfectant. Start with clean areas first and then progress to dirty  
• To achieve low level disinfection, Vert-2-Go-Saber must remain wet for five minutes contact time on a clean surface. **Clean** means the absence of visible dust, soil, debris, blood or other potentially infectious material. **Contact** |
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<td><strong>time</strong> means the length of time, specified by the manufacturer (i.e., disinfectant label), a disinfectant must remain wet on a surface to be effective (i.e., achieve disinfection).</td>
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<td>• Can be used on <a href="#">non-critical equipment</a> if allowed by the equipment manufacturer (do not use on critical or semi-critical equipment)</td>
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<td>• Dispose of wipe after use, e.g., when:</td>
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<td>o No longer wet enough to moisten surfaces</td>
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<td>o Moving from a dirty area to a clean area</td>
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**Concerns about PPE**

In order to track, trend and action concerns as required by AHS policy and Health Canada Regulations, please email photos with the name of the product, manufacturer, manufacturer product code, lot/batch number, expiry date (when present) and a description of the problem or incident to [MDIP@ahs.ca](mailto:MDIP@ahs.ca).