



MEMORANDUM

To: All Employees of OPTIONS NORTHWEST

From: Anna-Marie Eckensweiler, Executive Director

Date: August 10, 2020

Re: Updates on going out and wearing of Masks.
Please put in the COVID binders and post the chart.

Good day

Just wanted to touch base with you as many agencies across the province are discussing how they are trying to keep people living in congregate care (group homes) safe while the rest of the community opens for business. We have continued to advocate for remaining at home as much as possible even though the province has been re-opening. We know that individuals we support are more immune compromised so only essential visits for medical appointments etc. are recommended. Many agencies have used the Government of Canada's "**Going out, Do it Safely**" chart as a reference document to help determine the risk involved and what is essential. We have included the chart as a reference for you and are continuing to advocate for limiting access to public sites unless it is for an essential appointment. We continue to encourage going for walks and being outside to enjoy some of the beautiful summer weather.

As a reminder, if individuals supported need to attend an appointment out in the community, masks are required to be worn in public spaces. Individuals who are not able to wear a mask are exempt from this which is why we are strongly encouraging you to evaluate where you are taking individuals who cannot wear a mask. Our Ministry has deemed it necessary for **all employees working in direct care to wear masks for their entire shift (removal for eating is permitted)**. We recently have had some inquiries to this but there are no new directives with respect to the requirement. Employees in the office locations are also wearing masks in the administrative buildings when they are out of their offices in the hallways/common areas or meeting rooms. If social distancing in a meeting room is possible, masks may be removed if employees are comfortable doing so.

We encourage you to speak to your immediate supervisor or another member of the management team if you have any questions about the directions given. We are very appreciative of all your efforts to keep yourselves healthy and the individuals we support. Thank you for everything you continue to do for OPTIONS NORTHWEST.

Sincerely,

Anna-Marie Eckensweiler
On behalf of the Pandemic Team