



MEMORANDUM

To: All Employees of OPTIONS NORTHWEST

From: Anna-Marie Eckensweiler, Executive Director on behalf of the Pandemic Team

Date: November 24, 2020

Re: Updates on Mask use, Visits and Enhanced protocols

Please put in the COVID-19 binders

Good day

The Pandemic Team wishes to share some information during this time of heightened concern in our community with the increase in COVID-19 positive cases. We initiated protocols in advance of recent announcements to be proactive to mitigate risk. At this time, we wish to bring you up to date on our recent discussions;

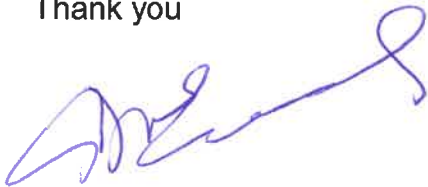
- **Mask use in the homes and office;** Recently more data about the spread of this virus has come out and while mask use in the homes has been a directive of the Ministry since the beginning of the pandemic, we are now requesting that anyone engaging in face to face care or direct support to individuals, wear a surgical mask for all procedures. Cloth masks will **not** be allowed in the homes effective immediately. In the office, they will be allowed if social distancing is still possible. Clinicians who are doing face to face contact should be wearing full PPE similar to the homes. 3-layer masks are recommended to keep everyone safe especially where care is being provided.
- The Ministry has just advised that **short-stay absences** must be limited to activities that enable health and important life activities (school, work if necessary and doctor's appts.) People supported are expected where possible to practice physical distancing, hand hygiene and to wear a face covering if able on a short stay absence.
- While the Ministry has provided directives that essential visits are permitted, as an agency we had **suspended all visits with family until November 30th** to better assess where we are at as a community in addressing COVID-19. The Ministry has indicated at this time **all non-essential and designated indoor visits are prohibited**. Limited supervised, non-essential outdoor visits with physical distancing are permitted according to the Ministry. We have agreed that families can still visit outside if weather allows or through a window/door to

maintain distancing. Visits must be set up in advance and cannot be spontaneous. Telephone visits, Facetime or skype visits are always allowed.

- The **one exception** to visiting is when someone is at end of life/ palliative or very ill. Those situations will be specifically addressed by the supervisor in that area.
- CRT Clinician visits will occur if they are deemed to be an essential visit. Masks for face to face visits can be found in the CRT COVID Kit.
- We continue to strongly encourage all employees and essential visitors to the homes to be actively screened before entering either the homes or the offices. **PLEASE do not come to work if you have symptoms.** Stay home and avoid the congregate living setting and offices for a minimum of 24 hours. This is in our policy but also a directive of the Ministry.
- We are asking everyone to continue to be vigilant during this time in our community of increased cases. The Ministry has asked everyone to ensure proper use of PPE. If you have any questions about PPE use, please reach out to your supervisor. Lilly Gifkins as well as Suzanne Fiorito can also be contacted for assistance. Your continued efforts at home and in your personal lives help to keep everyone at ONW safe as well.
- We will review these directives again on November 30th or sooner should something change in the messaging we receive.

As always, we are open to questions and feedback, please do not hesitate to reach out to a member of the management or Pandemic team. We appreciate you and everything you are doing to help fight COVID-19!!!

Thank you

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'M. Fiorito', written in a cursive style.