



MEMORANDUM

To: All Employees of OPTIONS NORTHWEST

From: Anna-Marie Eckensweiler, Executive Director

Date: May 8, 2020

Re: Masks/Continued Requirements to Stay Home
Please put in the COVID-19 binders in each location

Happy Friday

Just wanted to provide a few updates to you and acknowledge some feedback we have received on the cloth masks.

- The cloth masks that we ordered early on and that have been distributed to all employees have ties on them. We have heard from some of you that the ties may be slipping during the day. We have also heard that many of you changed out the ties and put your own elastic on or are using your own homemade masks. Great job for adapting to what makes it easier to you for use.
- In response to the feedback, we have secured more cloth masks that have **elastic** instead of the ties. If you would like to use one of those, please contact your supervisor and they will provide you with one with an elastic. Please keep the one you have with the ties and if you wish to change it over yourself to elastic, we have ordered elastic and when it comes in can provide that to you to switch the other one over.
- We also have taken the rest of the tie cloth masks to a local company and they will be retrofitting those tie masks with elastics so that we have additional ones if required.
- If your mask becomes wet or soiled while providing care, we have provided Level 1 masks to all locations for use if this is required. These are not the same as surgical masks and we are asking supervisors to clearly mark the boxes of the Level 1 masks for use if your cloth mask becomes wet.

Requirements to continue to social distance and Stay Home.

If you have been reading or watching the news, you will note that the Ford government is starting to slowly “re-open” some things in Ontario starting today. The government’s messaging as well as our Ministry is that this is not meant for LTC facilities and a sector like ours that supports people who may be more vulnerable. We know that “cabin fever” may be prevailing but the opening up of garden centres, or hardware stores should not mean anything different for the individuals we support. Our Health and Safety obligation as employees and as employer is to ensure the health and safety of all of our employees and the individuals we support. We have an obligation to continue to engage in best practice which includes but is not limited to all of the directions previously given; washing of hands frequently, coughing into your sleeve, using

hand sanitizer as required, social distancing whenever possible, wearing a cloth mask at all times in congregate care settings, screening before every shift, staying home if you have illness symptoms, going out in public only when necessary and taking added precautions when re-fueling or grocery shopping, regularly cleaning frequently handled surfaces and the list goes on. Nothing has changed with the recent announcements of re-opening parts of our community. The expectations remain the same in that we want to keep the individuals we support and our employees healthy and well. By continuing our current practices that have worked to date, allows for additional time for the settling of the risks to COVID.

We continue to thank you for the work that you are doing for OPTIONS NORTHWEST and appreciate all of your efforts. For the mothers/grandmothers/stepmothers or those in a care giving role, hope you have a Happy Mother's Day with your families.

Take good care everyone.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Eckensweiler', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Anna-Marie Eckensweiler