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Guidance document to Physicians: Re-open Saskatchewan Phase 1

We wish to thank all physicians who have offered their time and assistance to provide adequate care to patients while participating in planning and executing the initiatives to manage the potentially devastating outcomes associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. We have now entered a phase where certain restrictions will be lifted by the Ministry of Health.

Physicians have been asking when they can resume the provision of certain services which were restricted during the Re-Open Saskatchewan Plan.

Details of the Re-Open Saskatchewan plan can be found on the [Saskatchewan Ministry Website](#).

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan guidance is to follow the advice and orders of the Saskatchewan [Chief Medical Officer](#), Dr. [Saqib Shahab](#).

The CPSS recommends that physicians consider the following when planning to re-start previously restricted services, or moving to increased services in areas previously limited:

- Could providing this service possibly lead to any complications which may need intervention in an ER or result in a hospital admission, placing a burden on services required/burdened during the pandemic?
- Risk vs benefit of the service, for patients seeking care, physicians and their staff, the public and other patients of the physician. Consider the risks of inadvertent exposure when the patient has to leave their house and potential exposure when patients present at your office. What are the risks to other patients, staff and healthcare provider?
- Would your peers and colleagues perceive this service delivery as necessary during this phase of the pandemic, and would they support the decision when considering the needs of the broader population?
- Do you have access to adequate supplies of PPE for yourself and your staff? Will providing the service require you to use resources that may be scarce, thus causing a shortage where is it required?
- The pandemic does not change the requirements to maintain detailed and adequate documentation as set out in Bylaw 23.1 of the [Regulatory Bylaws](#).

The College again refers to the [Code of Conduct](#), [Code of Ethics](#) and our guideline on [Physicians and Health Care Emergencies](#).

When considering re-opening previously restricted medical services during the re-opening process, the [Ministry guidelines](#) are as follows:

1. Patient and Client Considerations

***To serve the public by regulating the practice of medicine
and guiding the profession to achieve the highest standards of care***

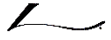
- Initial patient and client bookings will need to be limited to maintain necessary public health measures, but may need to be prioritized by urgency.
- Patient and client bookings should be scheduled in a manner that ensures no more than 10 patients/clients are required to gather in waiting areas.
- If clients must attend with children or other family members, those individuals must be included in the maximum number of people allowed in the area. Should scheduling errors result in more than 10 people, alternate waiting areas should be planned.
- Alternative solutions to waiting in the office should be considered, such as asking people to wait in vehicles and text messaging or calling when appointments are ready.
- At the time of booking or in advance of an appointment, clinic staff should call patients/clients to inform them of the public health measures. Staff should also ask if patients/clients have been experiencing symptoms of illness consistent with COVID-19.
- Seats in waiting areas should be spaced to maintain a minimum physical distance of two metres. Household contacts are not required to separate.
- Visual cues for areas where patients/clients are required to queue should be marked and a directional flow through the facility established.
- Non-essential items should be removed from client waiting areas, including magazines, toys, and remote controls.
- Staff should screen all patients/clients for visible symptoms consistent with COVID-19. Anyone who is symptomatic should be asked to wear a surgical/procedure mask. Note: Medical professionals may determine if appointments for symptomatic clients should be canceled.
- Common areas and other high-touch surfaces and objects should be cleaned and disinfected after each use, including reception counters, seating areas (including clinic room seats), doors, handrails and objects or machines used in therapies.
- All medical and health professionals must practice effective hand hygiene after each client - washing their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer approved by Health Canada (DIN or NPN number).
- Employers should carefully consider the appropriate use of personal protective equipment for staff and patients/clients. For more information, see [COVID-19 Appropriate Use of PPE for Employers](#).
- Carefully consider any COVID-19 safe return-to-work recommendations provided by professional associations or regulatory bodies.

2. Cleaning and Disinfecting

- The COVID19 virus can survive for several days on different surfaces and objects. Frequent cleaning and disinfection is important to prevent spread of the disease.
- Workplaces should implement enhanced environmental cleaning. Commonly touched areas and shared equipment should be cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily or whenever visibly soiled.
- Wherever possible, discourage workers from sharing phones, desks, offices and other tools and equipment.
- Commonly touched areas include light switches, door handles, toilets, taps, hand rails, counter tops, touch screens/mobile devices and keyboards.
- Clothing and fabric items should be laundered and dried on the highest temperature setting possible. Ensure items are thoroughly dried.
- [Cleaning and sanitizing information](#) is available at saskatchewan.ca/COVID19.
- Hand sanitizers should be approved by Health Canada (DIN or NPN number) to ensure they are effective.

Thank you again – the College and public owe a profound debt of gratitude to all our health professionals and everybody who will be on the front lines of this pandemic.

Sincerely,



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