



COLLEGE OF DIETITIANS  
OF ALBERTA

## **Safely Returning to Practice: Information on Providing Dietetic Services**

May 1, 2020  
Amended: May 26, 2020

On May 3, 2020, the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) made Record of Decision – CMOH Order 16-2020, which amended CMOH Order 07-2020, and created allowances for the provision of specified non-essential health services to Albertans.

The College of Dietitians of Alberta encourages Registered Dietitians (RDs) that are working virtually, to continue to do so when they can. For those who will be seeing patients/clients in person, the following guidelines are meant to assist you in returning to face-to-face interactions with patients/clients in their businesses.

All Dietitians must continue to take measures as outlined by Alberta Health to promote physical distancing where possible, and where not, to use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

### **Patient and Client Considerations**

#### **Patient Screening**

- CMOH Order 05-2020 (see link below in Resources) legally requires individuals who have a cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat (not related to a pre-existing health condition or illness) to be in isolation for 10 days from the start of symptoms, or until symptoms resolve, whichever takes longer.
- Screening protocols must be able to identify:
  - Symptomatic patients (cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat)
  - Asymptomatic patients who are isolating or required to quarantine (as per CMOH 05-2020)
  - Asymptomatic patients in general population
- 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.
- 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 and health professionals must follow current AHS Interim IPC Recommendations for COVID-19 (see link below in Resources). Note: Health professionals may determine if appointments for symptomatic clients should be deferred, cancelled or provided virtually.

Resources:

**Alberta Health Services Online Self-Assessment Tool**

(<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Journey/COVID-19/Pages/HWAssessLanding.aspx>)

**CMOH Order 05-2020** ([https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/005ee2c3-9877-4145-98d0-](https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/005ee2c3-9877-4145-98d0-4306162ac5aa/resource/46aa9494-7454-4dd4-9f74-a250257be1ab/download/health-cmob-record-fof-decision-cmob-05-2020.pdf)

[4306162ac5aa/resource/46aa9494-7454-4dd4-9f74-a250257be1ab/download/health-cmob-record-fof-decision-cmob-05-2020.pdf](https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/005ee2c3-9877-4145-98d0-4306162ac5aa/resource/46aa9494-7454-4dd4-9f74-a250257be1ab/download/health-cmob-record-fof-decision-cmob-05-2020.pdf))

**AHS Interim IPC Recommendations for COVID-19**

(<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/ipc/hi-ipc-emerging-issues-ncov.pdf>)

## Environment Management

- CMOH Order 07-2020 (see link below in Resources): Physical distancing requirements remain in place under current public health orders, which includes:
  - Maintaining a physical distance of 2 metres between clients, between co-workers and between health practitioners and clients whenever possible.
  - Limits on gatherings of more than 15 people.
- 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 15 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 15 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.
- 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.
- Common areas and other high-touch surfaces and objects should be cleaned and disinfected with proper disinfectants that have a DIN issued by Health Canada after each use, including reception counters, seating areas (including clinic room seats), doors, handrails and objects or machines used in therapies.
- Employers should carefully consider the appropriate use of personal protective equipment for staff and patients/clients. Continuous masking (surgical/procedure mask) is required of all staff providing direct client/patient care or working in client/patient areas where physical distancing or barriers are not possible. For more information see Alberta Personal Protective Equipment Guideline at <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-healthcare-ppc-guidance.pdf>
- Carefully consider any COVID-19 safe return-to-work recommendations provided by other regulatory bodies or professional associations.

Resources:

**CMOH Order 07-2020** ([https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/c02f3b06-9c37-4845-98ee-](https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/c02f3b06-9c37-4845-98ee-d07d805fdce1/resource/32f3367d-9a15-4aef-af6e-4e960891c14e/download/health-cmob-record-of-decision-cmob-07-2020.pdf)

[d07d805fdce1/resource/32f3367d-9a15-4aef-af6e-4e960891c14e/download/health-cmob-record-of-decision-cmob-07-2020.pdf](https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/c02f3b06-9c37-4845-98ee-d07d805fdce1/resource/32f3367d-9a15-4aef-af6e-4e960891c14e/download/health-cmob-record-of-decision-cmob-07-2020.pdf))

*Alberta Government – BizConnect, including information for connecting with PPE suppliers (<https://www.alberta.ca/biz-connect.aspx>)*

**Handwashing, cleanliness/sanitation, hygiene and respiratory etiquette**

- All health professionals must practice effective hand hygiene after each client - washing their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (greater than 60% alcohol content) approved by Health Canada (DIN or NPN number).
- Hand washing with soap and water is required if the employee or volunteer has visibly soiled hands.
- Patients should be instructed to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer when entering the clinic and again before leaving.
- Health professionals should make every effort to ensure respiratory etiquette by shielding coughs and sneezes to prevent the spread of droplets. Patients should be encouraged to follow respiratory etiquette.

**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.
- Hand sanitizers should be approved by Health Canada (DIN or NPN number) to ensure they are effective.

*Resources:*

***Alberta Health Services Cleaning and Sanitizing Information***

*(<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/ppib/if-ppib-covid-19-environmental-cleaning-public-facilities.pdf>)*

***Health Canada Hard surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers (COVID-19)***

*(<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19.html>)*

**Staff Management**

- CMOH Order 05-2020 (see link below in Resources) legally requires individuals who present symptoms of COVID-19 to be in isolation for 10 days from the start of symptoms, or until symptoms resolve, whichever takes longer.
- Employers must implement active daily screening of staff for symptoms and/or international travel and/or close contact with persons with COVID-19.
- Staff must be made aware of current COVID-19 guidelines and policies.
- Employers and Staff should refer to current Health Canada and Alberta Health Services (AHS) Interim Recommendations for COVID-19, including resources for (see links below in Resources):
  - Routine Practices

- Contact and Droplet Precautions
- Donning and Doffing PPE
- Environmental Cleaning
- Hand Hygiene

*Resources:*

**CMOH Order 05-2020** (<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/005ee2c3-9877-4145-98d0-4306162ac5aa/resource/46aa9494-7454-4dd4-9f74-a250257be1ab/download/health-cmoh-record-fof-decision-cmoh-05-2020.pdf>)

**Health Canada Infection Prevention and Control for COVID-19: Second Interim Guidance for Acute Healthcare Settings** (<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/infection-prevention-control-covid-19-second-interim-guidance.html>)

**Health Canada Risk-informed decision-making guidelines for workplaces and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic** (<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/guidance-documents/risk-informed-decision-making-workplaces-businesses-covid-19-pandemic.html>)

**Health Canada Hard surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers (COVID-19)** (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19.html>)

**Alberta Health Services Interim IPC Recommendations COVID-19** (<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/ipc/hi-ipc-emerging-issues-ncov.pdf>)

**Alberta Health Services Point of Care Risk Assessment (PCRA)** (<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/ipc/hi-ipc-acute-care-pcra.pdf>)

**Alberta Health Services 4 Moments of Hand Hygiene (poster)** (<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/hp/hb/if-hp-hb-moments-1-portrait.pdf>)

**Alberta Health Services Cover Your Cough (poster)** (<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/ipc/if-hp-ipc-cover-your-cough-general.pdf>)

**Alberta Health Services Aerosol-Generating Medical Procedure Guidance Tool novel coronavirus (COVID-19)** (<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page17091.aspx>)

**Alberta Health Services Guidelines for Continuous Masking in Healthcare settings** (<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/ppih/if-ppih-covid-19-ppe-continuous-use-guidance-masking.pdf>)

**Alberta Health Services Routine Practices in Community-Based Services** (<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/ipc/hi-ipc-routine-practices-info-community.pdf>)

Where adherence to this guideline is not possible, RDs must continue to provide virtual services, until it is possible to adhere to the guideline and/or Alberta Health recommendations change.

If you have questions, please contact the College office.

College of Dietitians of Alberta  
1320, 10123 99 Street  
Edmonton, AB T5J 3H1

Phone: (780) 448-0059  
Fax: (780) 489-7759  
Toll Free: 1-866-493-4348  
Email: [office@collegeofdietitians.ab.ca](mailto:office@collegeofdietitians.ab.ca)  
Website: [www.collegeofdietitians.ab.ca](http://www.collegeofdietitians.ab.ca)