

COVID-19 UPDATE GUIDELINES FOR HOMECARE PROVIDERS

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the in-home care you provide is critical to the community. It is important that you follow the caring guidelines provided to protect you and your clients. The guidance includes:



- Follow proper handwashing guidelines when arriving and before leaving the home.
- Wear a mask, apron, and gloves when providing direct personal care.
- Clean common surfaces with disinfectant often.
- Try to maintain social distancing when not providing direct care.
- In-home caregivers may have multiple clients per day in the community, as the risk of spread is smaller compared to a nursing home.
- In home caregivers should remain in the community and not also work in LTC facilities or the hospital.

You should not go to work/provide home visits if you have any symptoms of illness. Or if you have had exposure to a known COVID 19 case in the last 14 days.

Additional PPE recommended:

- If your client immunocompromised- wear a mask upon entry into their home.
- If your client has any respiratory symptoms – if tolerated, client should wear a mask and you must wear gown/apron, gloves, surgical mask including eye shield for direct care. Other times 6 feet distancing should be maintained.
- For persons with known COVID-19 more specialized masks and protective equipment is worn the entire time you are in the home, unless the person has recovered and is no longer on isolation. In these cases, seek guidance from the client's GP and the Ministry of Health's Epidemiology Surveillance Unit before proceeding.

EXTREMELY VULNERABLE POPULATION-SHIELDING

Shielding is a measure to protect the extremely vulnerable population by minimizing interaction between those who are extremely vulnerable and others. **As a caregiver how do you assist with shielding?**

- Know if your client is an extremely vulnerable person.
- Avoid face to face contact
- If you are showing symptoms of Covid-19 such as a cough or fever, please do not go into the home.
- Follow above guidelines and extra PPE precautions described in this document.

Who is extremely vulnerable?

- Solid organ transplant recipients ie. Kidney, liver.
- Persons with specific cancers:
 - Currently undergoing active chemo-

therapy

- Lung Cancer currently undergoing radical radiotherapy
- Blood cancers or bone marrow cancers ie. Leukemia, lymphoma or myeloma at any stage of treatment.
- Immunotherapy or continuing antibody treatments for cancer
- Targeted cancer treatments, which can affect the immune system ie. Protein kinase inhibitors.
- Bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last six months or are still taking immunosuppression drugs.
- Severe respiratory conditions including **ALL** cystic fibrosis diagnoses, **SEVERE** asthma, **SEVERE** COPD.
- Rare disease and inborn errors of metabolism that significantly in-

crease the risk of infections i.e. Severe combined immunodeficiency.

- Currently taking immunosuppression therapies that will significantly increase the risk of infections, including prolonged use of corticosteroids or other immune weakening drugs, or those used in the management of other chronic illnesses.
- Women who are pregnant, especially those with significant congenital or acquired heart disease.
- Severe obesity, defined as a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or higher.
- Poorly controlled chronic conditions, especially related to heart disease, respiratory illness, or Diabetes.
- HIV that is not managed by HIV treatment or for those who have a low CD4 cell count.

Questions?

If you have any questions related to Covid-19 please contact the **Helpline**, 7 days a week from 9 am to 9 pm at 444-2498

Diana Liacos– Home Care Advisor for the Ministry of Health is also available at 278-4919.

Caring for the Caregiver

As a caregiver the focus is often on our clients, in these stressful times it is important to take time to care for yourself. If you are experiencing anxiousness, worry, or stress please reach out for help 7 days a week, from 9 am to 9 pm at 543-1111.