

Advanced Primary Care – Clinic Update – March 16th, 2020

Dear valued APC patients,

We hope everyone kept warm over the weekend and are adjusting well through the fast moving and fluid situation in regards- to COVID-19.



Our situation here in the clinic is evolving and changing quickly as well and we are committed to making any necessary adjustments that will ensure the safety of our patients and our community through these challenging times.

We have made the following adjustments in clinic to do our part to contain the spread of COVID-19 and to maintain the health and safety of any patients that visit the clinic:

- **Limiting exposure at the front reception area** – any patients with:
 - **fever, cough, runny nose, shortness of breath** or
 - if you have travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days
 - or any flu-like symptoms

to please notify us before you arrive. Our team will escort you in a separate entrance to the clinic and provide hand sanitizer and a mask to be worn throughout your visit. We will endeavour to escort all patients to an examination room immediately upon arrival to limit time spent in the common area up front.

- **Enhancing our use of Virtual Medicine** – virtual medicine allows our patients access to care with our nurses and/or physicians without having to leave home. Our team is well trained to triage patients over the phone to assess how we may best handle each case and we are encouraging patients to **call ahead** of time to provide details in regards to signs and symptoms so that we can provide the best care while limiting any risks.
- **Behavioral Health**- evidence from other affected countries shows that mental health is a major consideration in this epidemic. Our Behavioral Health Consultant (Psychologist) is available to all our patients by telephone appointment throughout this public health emergency. Please feel free to access her expertise or contact your MOA to arrange an appointment by telephone or in person.
- **Clinical pathways for possible COVID-19 cases** – to ensure that we protect anyone visiting the clinic, we have created a clinical pathway that allows any possible cases to enter the clinic, make their way to a strategically designated examination room. This will minimize contamination and maximize safety with dignity. If necessary, they will be offered a mask and hand sanitizer etc. during the visit. Our isolation room is equipped with a supplies, gowns, masks and test kits to allow our nurses and physicians to avoid contamination to the clinic and other patients. All staff are being regularly trained in infection control according to AHS standards and methods during this exceptional period.

Any patients that are triaged over the phone to be at high risk of having COVID-19 may be directed to the **public assessment centres** as this may be the safest and most effective route to safety. Our office will assist such patients in accessing public COVID-19 services with communication to the relevant authorities.

Alberta Health Services has sent out a **COVID-19 Self- Assessment** that can be found at the link below and we encourage everyone to utilize it.

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/journey/covid-19/Pages/COVID-Self-Assessment.aspx?cldee=dG9tc3phYm9Ac2hhdy5jYQ%3d%3d&recipientid=contact-de60b83a01b3e811a826000c29ee8689-c6ec8a2e2076471f8149b5be0997fda0&esid=e7f5eecf-c867-ea11-a82d-000c29ee8689>

ATTENTION: To our Most Vulnerable Patient Population

To best protect our most vulnerable patients, we have opened- up portions of our physicians' schedules to accommodate virtual medicine and house calls to ensure they receive the care that they require without having to visit the clinic. In addition, we will offer this patient population mobile-at-home lab services and APC will waive any additional fees for these services during this pandemic. This population includes anyone **65 years of age or older** or with a **chronic medical condition** or **immunosuppressed individuals**. Our clinical staff will assist you in determining your risk and need for mobile services.

We will continue to communicate throughout this process and pass along updates as they become available and we thank everyone for their continued support.

Should you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call our Client Relations Manager, Chris Isaac at 587-329-6020 or chris.isaac@advancedprimarycare.ca.

We will all work together to stop the spread of COVID-19!

Your APC Care team

Thomas F. Szabo MD

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