

## Plan for Return to Clinical Practice in Respect to Covid-19

This plan was developed with the goal of reducing the risk of exposure to the virus that causes Covid-19 for both patients and the practitioners within our clinical setting. Here, we identify the actions that the therapist at Seraphim Health and Wellness commits to, and that all visiting patients must commit to, in order to resume paramedical services.

*“Coronavirus is transmitted via liquid droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. The virus can enter through these droplets through the eyes, nose or throat if you are in close contact. The virus is not known to be airborne (e.g. transmitted through the particles floating in the air) and it is not something that comes in through the skin. It can be spread by touch if a person has used their hands to cover their mouth or nose when they cough. That’s why we recommend you cough or sneeze into your arm and wash your hands regularly.”*

Source: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/how-it-spreads>

The overall aim of these protocols is to reduce potential coronavirus transmission by:

- Required ongoing self-assessment for signs of Covid-19 related illness in both the patient and staff
- Reducing all physical, non-treatment related interactions amongst all people within the practice environment
- Hand hygiene requirements
- Avoiding face touching
- Enhanced cleaning protocols
- Appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Meeting professional requirements, particularly related to informed consent and liability insurance

### Self-Assessment for Covid-19 Symptoms: For Patients & Practitioners

#### Pre-Screening / Prior to Arrival

- Patients will be informed about their responsibilities at the time of booking.
- A notice will be placed on the website, and the online booking software will send them a copy of these protocols as part of a Covid-19 specific consent form they will be required to sign electronically, prior to arriving at their appointment.
- One day prior to their booked appointment, the patient will be required to complete the online BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment tool and to stay home if they experience any symptoms of Covid-19.
  - o The tool can be found here: <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>
- The therapist will contact the patient prior to their appointment as booked to discuss using the self-assessment tool, and to verify that it has been done.
- The practitioner will use the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment tool daily and commits to canceling all appointments if symptoms appear.
- Symptoms of Covid-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses and seasonal allergies. An appointment must be cancelled immediately if either the patient or the therapist presents with even mild symptoms that may be signs of Covid-19 including:
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Fever</li> <li>o Cough</li> <li>o Chills</li> <li>o Shortness of breath</li> <li>o Sore throat or pain with swallowing</li> <li>o Stuffy or runny nose</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Loss of sense of smell</li> <li>o Headache</li> <li>o Muscle aches</li> <li>o Fatigue</li> <li>o Loss of appetite</li> <li>o Digestive upset/Diarrhea</li> </ul>
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- Covid-19 symptoms may range from mild to severe. Patients are required to cancel appointments if they experience what they determine to be ‘just the sniffles,’ ‘seasonal allergies’ or ‘just feeling under the weather,’ on the day of their appointment.
- Patients who develop even mild illness or symptoms must cancel booked appointments, even without notice.
  - o They will not be charged a late cancellation fee if they cancel due to illness.

- ❑ Patients must confirm that they have not been in contact with anyone displaying illness, or signs and symptoms of Covid-19 within 14 days prior to their treatment.
- ❑ The patient will be required to sign (electronically) an Informed Consent of Inherent Risk document with respect to Covid-19, prior being treated. As a part of the consent form, patients must commit to understanding that while we've taken all possible measures to minimize risk of viral transmission, the nature of RMT, Chiro and Naturopathy treatments means that physical distancing is not possible in the treatment room.
- ❑ Patients with higher risk profiles and/or weakened immune systems should consider alternatives for care and postpone treatment.
- ❑ The therapist and patient must agree that the therapeutic benefit of treatment outweighs any potential consequence of treatment, including the possibility of viral transmission.

#### Upon Arrival at Clinic Front Door

- ❑ The therapist will advise the patient of their current results from online BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment tool.
- ❑ Patients will be asked to confirm their own current results from online BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment tool. Patients must confirm that they have done a pre-screening and have no signs of Covid-19.
  - As outlined here: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/symptoms>
- ❑ Masks must be worn at all times within the clinic space. If the patient has a mask, they are asked to bring it with them and wear it when they arrive. If the patient does not have a mask, a single-use mask will be provided for \$1 donation and they will be asked to wear it upon entering the clinic space.
- ❑ Patient must confirm that they have not travelled outside British Columbia within 14 days prior to their appointment.
- ❑ The treatment will be cancelled immediately if the patient does not meet the pre-screening criteria upon physical presentation at the clinic.
- ❑ The patient will use hand sanitizer upon entering and exiting the clinic.

### Physical Distancing

#### Reception Area / Entry into Clinic Space

- ❑ Patients must arrive unaccompanied and leave personal belongings in vehicle as able.
  - Minors will not be treated at this time.
- ❑ The practitioner and the patient will both maintain a space of 2 meters (6 feet) distance between each other in all clinic areas that are outside the treatment room.
- ❑ The fabric chairs have been removed from the reception area; they have been replaced with hard surface chairs for sanitation purposes.
  - Patients are not permitted to lounge in the clinic reception area before or after the treatment.
- ❑ Nothing remains in the clinic space that cannot be disinfected after each touch.
- ❑ Appointment times are scheduled to reduce the potential of patients crossing paths, and to allow for time in-between sessions for enhanced cleaning.
- ❑ Patients are asked to arrive on time and not be early or late for appointments.
- ❑ Patients are required to wait in their vehicles, until the practitioner comes to the clinic door to call them in.
- ❑ The clinic door will be opened for the patient by the practitioner. The clinic door will be re-opened by the therapist at the end of the appointment for the patient to leave without touching the door handle.

#### Within the Treatment Room

- ❑ It is not possible to maintain physical distancing while in the treatment room.
- ❑ Patients will be asked to keep all personal belongings within a plastic container, which can and will be sanitized between patients.
- ❑ Patients will be asked to remove from the clinic everything that they bring with them.

#### Restroom for Emergency Patient Use Only

- ❑ The restroom has been equipped with proper handwashing guidelines.

- Soap and fresh towels for drying will be available at all times.
- A waste bin has been placed next to the restroom door so that patients may use a towel to open the door, and then discard it before re-entering the clinic space.

## Hand Hygiene

### Reception Area / Entry into Clinic Space

- Immediately upon entering the clinic space the patient must use hand sanitizer provided by the practitioner.
- If hands are visibly soiled, the patient must opt to wash hands at the handwashing sink.
- The therapist will wash hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds between patients, before and after disinfecting spaces, before donning gloves and doffing gloves, and before donning or doffing other PPE like face masks or shields.
- Hand washing protocols will be posted visibly in the reception area and at sinks.
- Payment occurs in the reception area. Cash will not be accepted at this time. A wireless Point of Sale system with Tap is available for card use. In the event that this does not work, an invoice may be emailed to the patient in order that they pay it via e-transfer.
- The POS machine will be sanitized between each patient.
- Receipts will be emailed, not printed.

### In the Treatment Room

- The practitioner will open the door to the treatment room and allow the patient to enter. The practitioner will open/close the door before, during and after the treatment as required – reducing the need for the patient to touch the door.
  - Patients will be permitted to open the door for themselves after the treatment to let themselves out of the treatment room.
  - Tissue is available inside the treatment room that the patient may use as a barrier when opening the door.
  - Hand sanitizer is available within the treatment room; patients will sanitize their hands after the treatment.
  - The door and doorknobs will be disinfected between each patient.

## Avoid Face Touching

- The practitioner will communicate with the patient that coronavirus can be transmitted by touch if droplets are on the hand when it touches the face, as it can transfer those infected droplets to the mouth, nose or eyes.
- Tissue will be available throughout the clinic: in the reception area and treatment room in order that patients and the practitioner may use tissue to address an itch and/or touch the face for any other reason.
- The practitioner will wear a face mask at all times.
- Patients are required to wear face masks that cover both the nose and mouth at all times within the clinic space.
- Intraoral and external TMJ treatments will not be conducted at this time.
- Musculature of the face will not be palpated or treated at this time.

## Enhanced Cleaning

- Additional time has been scheduled between patients to allow for thorough cleaning of the treatment room.
- Visibly soiled surfaces will be cleaned followed by disinfection with a Canada Health Approved for use against Covid- 19 disinfectant as listed here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>
- Common areas will be cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day, including the restroom.
- All high touch surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected between patients, regardless of appearances. High touch surfaces include (but are not limited to):
  - Light switches, stool cover, chairs, door knobs, POS machine, electronic devices, table surfaces, chairs, stools, window coverings, faucets, etc.
  - The treatment table, table levers, face cradle, lotion bottles will be disinfected immediately

after each treatment.

- No hydrotherapy supplies, thermophores, table warmers or plush table covers will be used.
- A Cleaning and Disinfectant for Clinic Setting Poster will be on Display in the reception area.
- All linens, including blankets and pillow cases are single use only and will be laundered using high heat, detergent and bleach between each use.
- A disinfected plastic bin has been placed in the treatment room. The patient will be asked to keep all of their personal belongings in this bin during the treatment. Post treatment, this same bin will be used to carry used linens to the laundry room for washing.
- Bins will be disinfected between each patient before cycling back into use.

## Personal Protective Equipment

- The practitioner will wear a face mask at all times while working with a patient.
- The therapist's face mask will be changed in-between appointments.
- The therapist will wear non-latex gloves if/when appropriate.
  - Gloves may be appropriate when over-use of cleaning and/or chemicals causes skin irritation, or when the practitioner's hands or skin of the hands are otherwise injured.
  - Hands will be washed prior to putting the gloves on and immediately after removing them.
  - Gloves are also considered appropriate and will be worn by the therapist at the patient's request.
- Patients are required to wear a clean face mask that does not have an exhalation valve in the clinic at all times.
  - If patients have their own fabric face mask, they are requested to clean it prior to use, and to arrive at the clinic wearing it.
  - If patients do not have a face mask, a single-use non-medical mask will be provided at the time of their treatment for \$1.

## Professional Obligations

### Liability Insurance

- The RMTs carries professional liability insurance through Wilson M. Beck as provided through the Registered Massage Therapist Association of BC.
- The RMT therapist is following all the health and safety guidelines outlined by the Registered Massage Therapists Association of BC, the College of Massage Therapists of British Columbia and the Provincial Health Officer and that they are taking all reasonable precautions to clean and disinfect the clinic and all the surfaces within the treatment room.
- The chiro is following all the health and safety guidelines outlined by the Chiropractic Association of BC, the College of Chiropractic of BC and the Provincial Health Officer and that they are taking all reasonable precautions to clean and disinfect the clinic and all the surfaces within the treatment room.
- The naturopath is following all the health and safety guidelines outlined by the College of Naturopathic Physicians of BC and the Provincial Health Officer and that they are taking all reasonable precautions to clean and disinfect the clinic and all the surfaces within the treatment room.
- No guarantees have been made by the practitioner, that the patient may not come in contact with COVID-19 at or during an appointment.

### In the Event That a Patient Tests Positive for Covid-19 Having Been to an appointment within the 14- days Prior to Onset of Symptoms

- The patient will contact the clinic and inform them of positive test results and possible transmission of the virus immediately.
- The practitioner will immediately self-isolate.
- The practitioner will call public health at 8-1-1 to report the possible transmission and act on direction of Provincial Health.

### In the Event That a Patient Alleges they Caught COVID-19 from the Practitioner

- The practitioner will immediately call public health at 8-1-1 to report the alleged transmission, providing both the name of the practitioner and the name and contact details of the patient.
  - The patient must agree to the release of this information under these circumstances in order to receive treatment.

- All appointments with that practitioner will be cancelled and the practitioner will cease to provide services until Public Health has investigated and provided direction.
- The practitioner will immediately self-isolate until Public Health has investigated and provided direction.

#### In the Event That a Practitioner Catches COVID-19 or Displays Symptoms of Covid-19

- The practitioner will immediately self-isolate.
- The practitioner will call public health at 8-1-1 to report the symptoms and request access to Covid-19 testing.
  - If testing is granted:
    - All appointments will be cancelled, and the practitioner will cease to provide services until test results are returned negative.
    - If testing proves positive the practitioner will follow Public Health directives in informing patients treated over the previous 14 days about potential transmission.
  - If testing is not granted:
    - All appointments will be cancelled, and the practitioner will cease to provide services for a minimum of 10-days beyond the onset of symptoms, and/or until symptoms cease.

#### In the Event That a Practitioner Comes into Close Contact with Someone Showing Signs of Illness or Tests Positive for Covid-19

- The practitioner will immediately self-isolate.
- All practitioner related appointments will be cancelled and the practitioner will cease to provide services until:
  - The close contact has been tested for Covid-19 and the results proved negative and the practitioner is well,
  - OR after self-isolating for 14 days and having no symptoms of fever develop.
  - OR being cleared by a public health official.

#### Asymptomatic Spreaders

- Asymptomatic transmission of the coronavirus is an unavoidable risk of practice until we've acquired herd immunity, there is an effective treatment, or vaccine against Covid-19.
- We have put into place protocols to help mitigate that risk as outlined in the preceding documentation.
- No guarantees have been made by the clinic or practitioner, that the patient may not come in contact with COVID-19 at or during an appointment.

#### Informed Consent

In the current environment of Covid-19 risk, informed consent requires that the patient be informed and understands that:

- Any treatment involves some risk of Covid-19 transmission;
- The clinic and practitioner are following protocol to help reduce or mitigate risk where possible, but that risk cannot be reduced to zero;
- The patient consents to the treatment despite some risk;
- And the practitioner will document the patient's consent in advance and at every treatment.
- The patients contact information and name may be released to Public Health in the event of symptom presentation.