



<b>First Nations and Inuit Health Branch Directive</b>		<b>COVID-19 Symptoms and Illness Affecting Healthcare Professionals on Assignment in Remote and Isolated First Nations Communities</b>	
<b>Effective</b>	23-October-2020	<b>Applies To</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Governing Body
<b>Version</b>	2.0		<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership & Operations
<b>Amended Date</b>	01- February 2021		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Programs &amp; Services</b>
			<input type="checkbox"/> Client, Family & Community
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Chief Nursing Officer, Office of Primary Health Care Chief Medical Officer of Public Health, Office of Population and Public Health		

### 1. PURPOSE

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Indigenous Service Canada (ISC) is continuously working to ensure the safety and well-being of nurses and other healthcare professionals (collectively HCPs) as well as First Nations (FN) community members. This Directive establishes processes for protecting nursing station personnel and FN community members when an onsite HCP contracted or employed by ISC fails screening under the *Healthcare Professional Screening for COVID-19 Directive*.

### 2. DIRECTIVE STATEMENT

Until further notice, any HCP developing COVID-19 symptoms while serving an FN community must be assessed and tested for COVID-19. When the HCP has only mild symptoms, they must remain in self-isolation in their community accommodations until the COVID-19 test result is received. If the HCP has severe symptoms, regional emergency medical procedures and evacuation must be initiated. See **Annex A** for case management guidelines.

### 3. PROCEDURES

HCPs must perform daily self-screening during assignment, per the *Healthcare Professional Self-Screening for COVID-19 Directive*.

1. If an HCP is positive for any screening criteria:
  - The HCP cannot report to work;
  - The HCP must advise the Nurse in Charge or responsible manager as soon as possible who will manage the case per the guidance in **Annex A**;
  - Another HCP in the community must assess the HCP with consideration given to the management of symptoms;
  - Test the HCP for COVID-19 following provincial guidelines. If point-of-care testing is available and the case meets criteria for use, a test may occur following protocol; and,
  - The HCP must isolate within their accommodations following the guidance in **Annex B**.
  
2. When a potential case involves an ISC employee, the HCP and manager must follow the investigation and reporting protocol by notifying ISC COVID-19 Occupational Health and Safety generic email inbox as soon as possible ([aadnc.sstcovid-ohscovid.aandc@canada.ca](mailto:aadnc.sstcovid-ohscovid.aandc@canada.ca)). They must complete the fact-finding sheet and the *Hazardous Occurrence Investigation Report* (HOIR – LAB1070 form), per *Canada Labour Code - Part II* and the *Canada Occupational Health and Safety Regulations - Part XV*.
  
3. If the HCP is capable of doing so, they should work with the Nurse in Charge or Nurse Manager to:
  - Identify other employees/clients/partners with whom they may have been in direct contact;
  - Identify the areas that the employee had a physical presence; and,
  - Advise the local public health authority of their availability to support contact tracing and notification per local protocols

#### 4. COVID-19 vaccine side effects considerations

Health care professionals may receive the COVID-19 vaccine while in the community or just prior to travelling within the community. Side-effects associated with the COVID-19 vaccine may also be associated with COVID-19 infection with the exception of pain at the site of injection. If a HCP that has received the vaccine within the last 2 days, and is experiencing side effects that could be associated with a COVID-19 infection, they should refer to **Annex C** for further direction. Any HCP that experiences side effect other than pain at injection site should not report to work until symptoms resolve and will have to follow strict IPC measures upon return to work.

The side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine include but not limited to:

- Pain at site of injection
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Myalgia
- Arthralgia
- Chills
- Fever
- Swollen lymph nodes (E.g. axilla closest to injection site)

#### 5. SCOPE

All HCPs employed or contracted by ISC and working in remote and isolated First Nations communities must follow this Directive until further notice. At its discretion, ISC may adjust this Directive to expand to other service areas and will communicate changes when they occur.

#### 6. ACCOUNTABILITY

Chief Nursing Officer, Office of Primary Health Care and Chief Medical Officer of Public Health, Office of Population and Public Health

#### 7. REVISION

ISC FNIHB will review this Directive when recommendations from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) change substantively, or PHAC declares the pandemic has ended. ISC FNIHB will communicate changes to this Directive to HCPs.

#### 8. RELATED DOCUMENTATION:

- *Guidance for the Safe Movement of Essential Personnel, Medical Clients and Emergency Evacuees by Air*
- *Healthcare Professional Self-Screening for COVID-19 Directive*
- *Hazardous Occurrence Investigation Report form*  
EN: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/health-safety/reports/hazardous-occurrence.html>  
FR: <https://www.canada.ca/fr/emploi-developpement-social/services/sante-securite/rapports/situations-risques.html>

**Annex A: COVID-19 case management guidelines**

**Annex B: Self-isolation guidance**

**Annex C: COVID-19 vaccine side effects and management**

**Annex A: COVID-19 case management guidelines**

Severe symptoms requiring emergency transfer	Mild symptoms not requiring emergency transfer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange for medical evacuation through established regional protocols for medical emergencies;</li> <li>• Stabilization and monitoring of the HCP until transport;</li> <li>• Transfer the HCP to nearest receiving hospital; and,</li> <li>• Post-hospitalization and return home:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HCP to contact the regional office or agency and arrange for home travel; and,</li> <li>○ HCP to follow provincial guidelines regarding follow-up and isolation in their home jurisdiction.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HCP self-isolates while awaiting COVID-19 test result;</li> <li>• Daily follow-up and assessment of symptoms and severity by another HCP; and,</li> <li>• HPC advises management of COVID-19 test result as soon as it is received</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Negative COVID-19 test result</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to work after symptoms subside unless COVID-19 is still suspected</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Positive COVID-19 test result</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport the HCP to their home province;</li> <li>• HCPs that are COVID-19 positive cannot travel on regular commercial air service. Air transportation must meet the requirements of section 4.4 of the <i>Guidance for the Safe Movement of Essential Personnel, Medical Clients and Emergency Evacuees by Air</i>; and,</li> <li>• HCP follows provincial guidelines for follow-up and isolation in their home jurisdiction.</li> </ul>

## Annex B: Self-isolation guidance

- When the HCP has shared accommodations, until they receive their COVID-19 test result, they should:
    - Keep at least two (2) metres from others;
    - Keep interaction briefs, stay in a separate room,
    - Use a different bathroom when possible (if not possible, establish a cleaning plan); and,
    - Wear a non-medical mask or face covering when utilizing common living areas.
  - **How to isolate at home when you may have COVID-19. Public Health Agency of Canada.**  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/covid-19-how-to-isolate-at-home.html>
  - **How to quarantine (self-isolate) at home when you may have been exposed to COVID-19 and have no symptoms. Public Health Agency of Canada.**  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-how-to-self-isolate-home-exposed-no-symptoms.html>
  - When an ISC employed HCP is in self-isolation because they are exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms and/or have suspected/confirmed COVID-19 illness, the manager should review and discuss with the employee, on a case-by-case basis, their ability to work, options for alternate work when possible or if there is no option for alternate work or the employee is ill and cannot work determine the relevant paid leave as per their collective agreements and within respect of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat policies. Manager can refer to the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat information page on “Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Employee illness and leave” and/or contact a Labour Relations Advisor.
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## Annex C: COVID-19 vaccine side effects and management

