

## Medical Client Transport and Hygiene during COVID-19 Pandemic

### How coronavirus spreads

Human coronaviruses cause infections of the nose, throat and lungs. They are most commonly spread from an infected person through:

- respiratory droplets generated when you cough or sneeze
- close, prolonged personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- touching something with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose or eyes before washing your hands

Symptoms may include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. More serious symptoms include difficulty breathing.

COVID-19 symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to the virus.

Drivers, clients, and escorts should at all times:

- **Follow good hand hygiene**, washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or, if water not available, rubbing hand sanitizer (60% alcohol or more) until hands are dry
- **Avoid touching face, eyes, nose or mouth**, especially with unwashed hands
- **Cough and sneeze** into their sleeve and not their hands
- **Maintain social distancing** (2 meters or more)

The driver should clean and disinfect the vehicle after each client. *Refer to Cleaning and Disinfection of Medical Transport Vehicles.*

**A client who is known or suspected to have COVID19 should only be transported if recommended by the local health care provider.**

### Before transport:

- ☐ Consult health professional for clients with a new illness or worsening of an existing respiratory illness (e.g. coughing, fever, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing). If possible, dedicate a medical transport vehicle and driver for clients with these types of illnesses.
- ☐ Ensure vehicle has been cleaned and disinfected after each client.
- ☐ Supply each medical transport vehicle with:
  - At least two bottles of alcohol-based hand rub (60% alcohol or more), one for the driver and one for the client and escort,
  - Medical masks, tissues, eye protection and disposable gloves and gowns.
  - Garbage bin with liners and lid. If possible, use a non-touch garbage bin. If not available, individuals should wash their hands after touching the lid.

#### Sources:

Ontario Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee. Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning for Prevention and Control of Infections in All Health Care Settings, 3rd Edition

PHAC. Public health management of cases and contacts associated with novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

PHAC. How to care for a person with COVID-19 at home – Advice for caregivers

PHAC. Annex: Environmental Sanitation Practices for Airlines to Control the Spread of Novel Coronavirus

WHO. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) technical guidance: Points of entry and mass gatherings

### Transport procedures:

**For clients who are not suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 and do not have a cough, fever, shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing.**

- ☐ Follow all precautionary instructions specified by the health professional.
- ☐ Drivers, clients and escorts should clean their hands immediately before entering the vehicle, washing with soap and water or, if water is not immediately available, hand sanitizer (60% alcohol content or higher).
- ☐ Place client and escort in seat furthest distance from driver to observe a **2 metre distance** (2 arm lengths).

### Supplies:

- ☐ Garbage bin with liners and lid
- ☐ Alcohol based hand sanitizer (60% alcohol content or more)
- ☐ Disinfectant (spray or wipe)
- ☐ Disposable gloves
- ☐ Household soap/detergent
- ☐ Paper towels

If the client is known or suspected to have COVID19 or has a cough, fever, shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing:

- ☐ Disposable Gown
- ☐ Eye protection (goggles or face shield)
- ☐ Medical mask

**For *suspected or confirmed* COVID-19 clients or clients who have a cough, fever, shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing:**

- ☐ Notify provincial Emergency Health Services (if appropriate) and the receiving facility prior to arrival to ensure appropriate infection and prevention control measures are in place.
- ☐ **Clients and escorts** should follow the guidance of their local health care provider with respect to personal protective equipment.
- ☐ At minimum, the **client** should be wearing a medical mask.
- ☐ If the **driver or escort** will be assisting a symptomatic client with loading or unloading, the driver must wear a **medical mask, gown, gloves and eye protection** (personal protective equipment). The driver must follow appropriate training/instructions provided by recognized trainers when putting on and taking off personal protective equipment. Consult the Community Health Director to access training.
- ☐ If the **driver can maintain a 2 metre distance** from the client, and the client is wearing a mask, no personal protective equipment is needed.
- ☐ If the **driver cannot maintain a 2 metre distance**, personal protective equipment is needed. The eye protection should not impair the vision of the driver. These interactions should be as minimal as possible.
- ☐ Only transport one symptomatic client (and their escort) at a time to maintain isolation of the client.
- ☐ The **driver and escort should monitor** themselves for 14 days for one or more symptoms of COVID-19. Go about their day but avoid crowded places and increase their personal space from others, whenever possible. If they notice symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they are to self-isolate and call their health provider for advice.

### **Cleaning and Disinfection after transport of each client:**

- ☐ Put on **personal protective equipment**. Always wear closed shoes/boots.

If a client is known or suspected to have COVID19 or had a cough, fever, shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing, the following should be worn when cleaning and disinfecting:

- Disposable gloves
- Disposable gown
- Eye protection
- Medical mask

If the client does not fall into these two categories, disposable gloves are to be worn.

- ☐ **Clean** all frequently touched surfaces to remove visible dirt; use regular household soap or detergent and water.
- ☐ **Disinfect** all frequently touched surfaces to kill germs and viruses on surfaces; most effective after surfaces are cleaned.
  - Commercial **disinfectant** that has a Drug Identification Number (DIN) and a virucidal claim (removes 99.9 % of viruses, bacteria). Follow the instructions on the label; or
  - Bleach water solution: **one (1) part bleach and nine (9) parts water** in a labelled spray bottle. Prepare new solution daily.
- ☐ **Alternatively**, a combined cleaner/disinfectant product could be used.

### **Steps for Cleaning Procedures:**

1. Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose, and mouth.
2. Avoid direct contact with body fluids. If body fluids are present (nose/mouth excretions, blood, vomit, diarrhea, etc.) put on disposable gloves and use paper towels to absorb prior to cleaning.
3. Clean visibly soiled surfaces with detergent/cleaner. Use only disposable cloths (paper towels or wipes).
4. Clean all frequently touched surface.
5. Place used paper towels in garbage bin.
6. Apply disinfectant to the surface as per manufacturers' instructions. Surface should be moist. Allow to air dry.
7. Remove gloves, and any other personal protective equipment, and dispose of them.
8. Only remove personal protective equipment when the above cleaning is done, following the same order for removing the equipment as on the previous page. Dispose in garbage bin.
9. Dispose of waste daily according to health facility infectious waste disposal procedures.
10. Clean hands, washing with soap and water or hand sanitizer (60% alcohol content or higher) if water not available
11. Complete the Cleaning Checklist.

#### **Frequently touched surfaces:**

- ☐ Seats/seat back
- ☐ Door handles
- ☐ Overhead grab handles
- ☐ Windows
- ☐ Lock buttons
- ☐ Seat belts/buckles
- ☐ Center console
- ☐ Arm rests

**Concerns regarding unprotected exposure should be directed to the local health care provider**

**Community name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Vehicle Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Door handles (inside and out)
- ☐ Lock buttons
- ☐ Seat belts/buckles
- ☐ Center console
- ☐ Arm rests

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