

Clinical Support for City of Toronto Shelters experiencing outbreak, effective January 2022

Purpose

The purpose of this program is to provide virtual clinical support to shelter residents who are COVID positive and/or high risk close contact isolating in situ during a shelter COVID-19 outbreak.

Routine ICHA Clinical Supports

As part of ICHA's general shelter model, many shelters have established clinical support available that is provided by an ICHA physician. Please proceed with the usual physician booking process within your shelter for non-urgent primary care concerns and follow-up.

Clinical Support During Outbreak Period

In addition to established clinical care, ICHA is pleased to offer additional virtual clinical support to shelters for residents who are isolating in-situ under direction of Toronto Public Health as a result of a shelter outbreak. The aim of this virtual clinical support is to support residents with non-urgent health care concerns that arise during their in-situ isolation. This program will operate like a virtual walk-in clinic, with the demand being driven by the shelter provider based on an identified resident/client needs.

Normal signs and symptoms of COVID-19

The following are normal signs and symptoms of COVID-19 - they are to be expected and do not require clinical consultation unless the symptoms are severe, persistent or causing distress.

- Cough
- Fever or chills
- Decreased or loss of taste or smell
- Nausea and isolated and episodes of vomiting or diarrhea
- Fatigue/feeling tired
- Sore muscles or joints

Managing Symptoms of COVID-19

Managing the above symptoms of COVID-19 is recommended with rest, increased fluid intake, Tylenol (acetaminophen), Advil (ibuprofen) and/or Gravol (Dimenhydrinate) which are available over the counter.

Please refer to the attached document "At-home Symptom Management for Covid-19" for further guidance on supporting clients through mild symptoms of Covid.

The following logistical/administrative issues should be addressed by SSHA or TPH and will not be able to be addressed by ICHA's Virtual Clinical Team.

- Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) or cleaning protocols
- Steps for referral to COVID-19 Recovery & Isolation Site, including prioritizing the referral of particular individuals for intake based on identified needs
- Access to testing and transportation to testing
- Isolation protocols or logistical support for isolation
- TPH Guidance

If a clinical team member is required to address the health needs of a resident during isolation, please complete the following online form. Information collected will include:

- Name and Birthdate
- Health Card number (if available)
- Presenting complaint

Resident Complaints that are Appropriate for Requesting a Virtual Consultation by ICHA Nurse

Reasons to call ICHA nurse (i.e. inclusion criteria):	Reasons not to call the ICHA nurse (i.e. exclusion criteria)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Addictions related concerns (not already addressed by MOVID/Harm Reduction) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overdose risk ○ Withdrawal ● Covid Deterioration (i.e. Difficulty with breathing, chest discomfort, dizziness or ligh-headedness) ● Urgent prescription refills for clients without an existing care provider/prescriber ● New health concerns needing assessment and a clinical opinion (Note: Please continue to call 911 for all medical or psychiatric emergencies as these cases should still be referred to ER) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chronic (pre-existing) conditions that can be followed up by regular weekly MD ● Emergencies requiring EMS and transfer to hospital ● Prescriptions or medication questions for clients with an existing provider or prescriber. These issues should be directed to that existing provider.

Disposition/Outcome Options

Please note that the ICHA nurse will assist you (i.e. shelter staff) and the resident to determine the best course of action for the resident. Options include:

- Managing Symptoms of COVID-19 or other urgent needs (see list above) and continuing to isolate in situ at shelter
 - Scheduling appointment to see ICHA physician or nurse practitioner on regularly scheduled days
 - Schedule appointment to see resident’s primary health care provider (family doctor/nurse practitioner)
 - Completing virtual assessment with appropriate provider, if applicable
 - MOVID - liaising with Harm Reduction workers on-site to develop appropriate safety measures in the context of substance use. If MOVID not yet on-site, liaising with team to identify if deploying MOVID team to site is appropriate
 - Additional support recommendations for resident from shelter operator
- Transfer to COVID-19 Recovery and Isolation site (please complete SSHA referral)
 - <https://s.cotsurvey.chkmkt.com/?e=235984&h=5A5AB617A87C71C&l=en>
- Arrange consult with Virtual ED
 - <https://www.torontovirtualed.ca/>
- Transfer to hospital via EMS
- Transfer to hospital via Mobile Crisis Intervention Team (MCIT) for mental health emergencies

Medications

If virtual appointment results in medication prescribing by NP, the following is the responsibility of the shelter operator:

- Identifying pharmacy to send prescription to
- Arranging pickup/delivery of medications
- Medication provision to resident

It is also recommended that all shelters have a supply of over-the-counter medications to dispense to clients to support symptom management. Please refer to “At-home Symptom Management for Covid-19” for guidance on when to dispense these medications.

- Tylenol/Acetaminophen 500mg
- Advil/Ibuprofen 400mg
- Gravol/Dimenhydrinate 50mg
- Cough tablets/drops

Hours of Operation and Expected Wait Times

- Service is available Monday to Friday, 9-5
- Nurses will return referral requests based on the order they are received
- Under normal circumstances, please allow for a 30-60 minute period to receive a return call
- Nurses will return your request for consult as soon as they are available
 - Please do not submit duplicate forms
- If clinical supports are required after hours and cannot wait until the following day, shelter providers can use the Virtual ED link above as a further supportive option.

To book appointment, click link below:

<https://forms.office.com/r/RPj3DnWWqe>