



## Recommended Practices and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Yukon Community Health Centres – Interim Guidance 18/01/2022

### Evidence of Omicron-associated community transmission

The following are interim guidelines for the use of PPE in community health centres specific to COVID-19. The presence or absence of symptoms and/or exposure risks will direct the provider or staff member to the recommended PPE for that particular encounter.

These recommendations do not supersede existing IPC guidance and occupational health and safety, requirements for protecting health care providers during the delivery of routine, direct patient care for other infectious diseases, such as tuberculosis (TB), measles or vancomycin-resistant enterococcus (VRE).

**Screening questions:** [yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/covid-19\\_screening\\_questions\\_for\\_cn\\_md\\_clinics\\_mass\\_imms\\_oct\\_2020\\_final.pdf](https://yukon.ca/sites/yukon.ca/files/covid-19_screening_questions_for_cn_md_clinics_mass_imms_oct_2020_final.pdf)

Responding “yes” to any of the above questions will indicate the need for augmentation of Routine Practices. If the individual is unable to respond to the screening questions, treat as a risk factor (“yes”) and follow the augmented Routine Practices.

Please note, at this time we recommend all staff in clinical areas wear a surgical/procedural mask and eye protection at all times; administrative staff and those without direct patient contact may wear a surgical/procedural mask; and recommend all patients/clients wear a surgical/procedural mask.

- Masks should be worn continuously while in the workplace. Masks can be used for an extended period of time while seeing different patients.
- Masks should not be re-used.
- Eye protection refers to goggles, face shield/visor (either reusable or disposable) or mask with an attached visor.
- Masks and eye protection can be worn continuously between:
  - o Patients who do not have a COVID-19 risk, or
  - o Patients confirmed with the same virus (ex: all with COVID-19 and no other associated respiratory virus)
- Masks and eye protection should be changed, cleaned or discarded when:
  - o Damaged
  - o Wet or visibly soiled
  - o After caring for a patient in droplet or droplet/contact precautions and before caring for a patient not in precautions
  - o Between patients cared for in droplet or droplet/contact precautions for different viruses (e.g. one patient has COVID-19 and the other has Influenza)

For more information, see existing guidance documents PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)-extended use mask guidelines available at [yukon.ca/en/health-and-wellness/health-concerns-diseases-and-conditions/find-information-health-professionals](https://yukon.ca/en/health-and-wellness/health-concerns-diseases-and-conditions/find-information-health-professionals).

## What are Routine Practices?

Routine Practices are the infection prevention and control (IPC) “practices for use in the routine care of all patients at all times in all healthcare settings and are determined by the circumstances of the patient, the environment and the task to be performed.”<sup>1</sup> Central to these Routine Practices is a point-of-care (POC) risk assessment. A POC risk assessment is performed by healthcare workers to determine which IPC measures are appropriate to assure safe patient care, given the symptoms of the patient and the intended interaction, and to protect the healthcare worker from exposure to infection (such as exposure to body fluids, respiratory secretions, sharps, etc.).

Routine Practices include, but are not limited to:

- Point-of-care risk assessment
- Hand hygiene (either soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer)
- Aseptic technique
- Patient placement and flow
- Appropriate use of PPE
- Management and cleaning of the patient care environment



**The continuation of basic public health measures shown to reduce the risk of transmission and acquisition of COVID-19 is imperative to all interactions. These health measures include:**

- **Physical/social distancing**
- **Hand hygiene**
- **Respiratory etiquette**

Additional measures can be put in place to help to create a safer environment for the patient and staff. Such environmental measures and visual cues include:

- Visual cues and signage at doors encouraging patients to call ahead if symptomatic
- Visual cues and signage re-enforcing good hand hygiene practices and respiratory etiquette
- Visual cues of signage with stop signs on sandwich board outside the health centre
- Plexiglass barrier for administrative staff
- Duct tape or other visual cue indicating appropriate spacing between patients
- Removing some seating in the waiting rooms to support safe distancing
- Staggering scheduled appointments in order to maximize capacity for physical distancing in the health center

The table on the following pages indicates the appropriate PPE for patient care based on target personnel and activity. If there are no COVID-19 symptoms or exposure risks (the patient responds “no” to the screening questions), continue Routine Practices relevant for the intended interaction.

If the patient responds “yes,” the patient can be safely seen in office for evaluation, diagnosis and treatment of an illness with staff using the appropriate PPE as per the table below. Consideration can be given to defer the visit for routine care, non-urgent cases. Providers are encouraged to re-book patient at time of deferral of visit.

<sup>1</sup> “Routine practices and additional precautions for preventing the transmission of infection in healthcare settings.” 2017-09-05. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/routine-practices-precautions-healthcare-associated-infections.html> Accessed 2022-01-04.

## Appropriate PPE for patient care for medical clinics and outpatient facilities, based on target personnel and activity.

Key:  Patients  Staff  Environmental Services

For individuals providing direct care to patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 outside the setting of an AGMP, contact/droplet precautions are recommended (eye protection, medical mask, gown, gloves). Discretionary use of an N95 instead of a surgical/medical mask is supported in circumstances where the healthcare provider determines the presence of an elevated risk of COVID-19 transmission with the patient interaction (based upon the PCRA).

Target space	Target personnel	Activity/Interaction	Recommended practices
Screening/ triage area	Staff	Screening or greeting a patient, not involving direct contact	Whether behind plexiglass or not: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wear a well-fitting surgical/procedural mask</li> <li>If the screener is moving away from the plexiglass and interacting with others, add eye protection</li> <li>Maintain at least 2 metres distance</li> </ul>
	Patients	Being screened	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hand hygiene</li> <li>Surgical/procedural mask</li> <li>Give tissues for respiratory hygiene</li> <li>Maintain at least 2 metres distance</li> <li>Assure safe disposal of used tissues</li> <li>Send to designated separate waiting area</li> </ul>
	Patients	Being screened	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hand hygiene</li> <li>Surgical/procedural mask</li> <li>Maintain at least 2 metres distance</li> </ul>
Non-clinical space	Staff	Tasks that do not involve patient contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain at least 2 metres separation</li> <li>Hand hygiene</li> <li>Well-fitting surgical/procedural mask</li> <li>Add eye protection if must be within 2 metres of someone</li> </ul>
Waiting room	Patients	Waiting for medical evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hand hygiene</li> <li>Surgical/procedural mask</li> <li>Respiratory etiquette</li> <li>If possible, isolate in room or in a designated area. If not feasible, maintain at least 2 metres from other patients</li> </ul>

\* Patients screening "YES" for symptoms of COVID-19 are encouraged to use the self-assessment test online or call 811. For non-urgent concerns, clients in the community are encouraged to schedule an appointment time prior to coming to the health centre. Health centres should be calling all booked appointments 24 hours in advance to ask the COVID-19 screening questions.

Target space	Target personnel	Activity/Interaction	Recommended practices
Waiting room	Patients responding <b>NO</b> to screening questions	Waiting for medical evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand hygiene</li> <li>• Surgical/procedural mask</li> <li>• Maintain at least 2 metres between other patients</li> </ul>
Consultation room	Healthcare workers	Performing a physical examination of patient responding <b>YES</b> to the screening questions or confirmed to have COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand hygiene</li> </ul> Droplet/contact precautions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surgical/medical mask or N95</li> <li>• Gown</li> <li>• Gloves</li> <li>• Eye protection</li> </ul> Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swab in a designated “lean” room whenever possible.</li> <li>• This step does not apply to health centres solely delivering public health services unless pre-approved to be involved in swabbing practices.</li> </ul>
	Healthcare workers	Performing physical examination of patient responding <b>NO</b> to the screening questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand hygiene</li> <li>• Surgical/procedural mask</li> <li>• Eye protection</li> <li>• Routine Practices including a POC risk assessment</li> </ul>
	Healthcare workers	Performing an AGMP on a patient responding <b>YES</b> to the screening questions <sup>2</sup> or confirmed to have COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand hygiene</li> <li>• Airborne + droplet/contact precautions:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N95</li> <li>• Gown</li> <li>• Gloves</li> <li>• Eye protection</li> </ul> </li> </ul> Note: In ER, protect open cupboards by covering with curtain/sheet

Target space	Target personnel	Activity/Interaction	Recommended practices
Consultation room	Patients responding <b>YES</b> to screening questions	Undergoing a medical evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand hygiene</li> <li>• Surgical/procedural mask</li> <li>• Respiratory etiquette</li> </ul>
	Patients responding <b>NO</b> to screening questions	Undergoing a medical evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand hygiene</li> <li>• Surgical/procedural mask</li> </ul>
All patient care areas	Environmental services	Cleaning and decontamination of patient care areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routine cleaning, any equipment shared between patients must be cleaned and disinfected**</li> <li>• Continuous mask and eye protection when in clinical areas</li> <li>• <b>If an AGMP has occurred in the room or patient with suspect/confirmed COVID-19 remains in the room during the cleaning, the cleaner should wear a properly fitted N95 respirator instead of a surgical/medical mask.</b> If not, close the room door for 2 hours, place “do not enter until xx:xx hours” sign on door. After 2 hours has passed, clean room following routine procedure</li> <li>• If the patient answers “YES” to screening questions or is confirmed to have COVID-19 and remains in the room during cleaning, individual may wear a well-fitting surgical/procedural mask or N95</li> </ul>

Target space	Target personnel	Activity/Interaction	Recommended practices
Response outside health centre: on-scene response or home visit	Healthcare workers	Performing a physical examination of patient responding <b>YES</b> to the screening questions or confirmed to have COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand hygiene</li> </ul> Droplet/contact precautions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well-fitting surgical/procedural mask or N95</li> <li>• Gown</li> <li>• Gloves</li> <li>• Eye protection</li> </ul> Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use designated “swab box” if swabbing for COVID-19, if applicable</li> </ul>
	Healthcare workers	Performing physical examination of patient responding <b>NO</b> to the screening questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand hygiene</li> <li>• Well-fitting surgical/procedural mask</li> <li>• Eye protection</li> <li>• Routine Practices including a POC risk assessment</li> </ul>
	Healthcare workers	Performing an AGMP on a patient responding <b>YES</b> to the screening questions <sup>2</sup> or confirmed to have COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand hygiene</li> <li>• Airborne + droplet/contact precautions:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N95</li> <li>• Gown</li> <li>• Gloves</li> <li>• Eye protection</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Patients responding <b>YES</b> to screening questions	Undergoing a medical evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand hygiene</li> <li>• Surgical/procedural mask</li> <li>• Respiratory etiquette</li> <li>• Any family members present during the visit are recommended to wear a surgical/procedural mask</li> </ul>

Target space	Target personnel	Activity/Interaction	Recommended practices
Response outside health centre: on-scene response or home visit	Patients responding <b>NO</b> to screening questions	Undergoing a medical evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand hygiene</li> <li>• Surgical/procedural mask</li> <li>• Any family members present during the visit are recommended to wear a surgical/procedural mask</li> </ul>
	Environmental services	Cleaning and decontamination of patient care areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routine cleaning, any equipment shared between patients must be cleaned and disinfected**</li> <li>• Continuous mask and eye protection when in clinical area</li> <li>• Be sure to dispose of used, contaminated PPE in the proper receptacle</li> <li>• If an AGMP has occurred in the room or patient with suspect/confirmed COVID-19 remains in the room during the cleaning, the cleaner should wear a properly fitted N95 respirator instead of a surgical/medical mask.</li> <li>• If the patient answers “YES” to screening questions or is confirmed to have COVID-19 and remains in the room during cleaning, individual may wear a well-fitting surgical/procedural mask or N95</li> </ul>

\*\*Additional information on appropriate cleaning practices in the medical offices can be found here: <https://yukon.ca/en/health-and-wellness/health-concerns-diseases-and-conditions/find-information-health-professionals>

<sup>2</sup>AGMP – aerosol generating medical procedure – include: intubation including placement of a King Airway, open airway suctioning, CPR with bag valve mask ventilation, bronchoscopy and bronchoalveolar lavage, sputum induction, nebulized therapy and non-invasive positive pressure ventilation (CPAP, BIPAP). Note: To be conducted in community health centres only for emergent treatment. For further information, please visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/reports-publications/covid-19-aerosol-generating-medical-procedures.pdf>