

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES CIRCULAR

Date: July 16, 2020

CIRCULAR NUMBER: COVID #2020-110 **Alternate Program(s):**

To: **Program Managers/Regional Directors/Community Area Directors**

Subject: **Supporting CLDS Participants to Safely Engage in Community Activities**

Replaces: **New**

Type: Policy
 Procedure
 Rate
 Information Only

Effective Date: Immediately

Purpose

This circular provides information about supporting Community Living disABILITY Services (CLDS) participants to safely engage in community activities during COVID-19.

Engaging in Community Activities

As Manitoba implements its plan to gradually restore safe services, it is important for CLDS participants, their families, support networks and service providers to know that participants can safely engage in many of the community activities that are important to them.

Manitoba implemented Phase Three of its plan to restore safe services on June 21. Manitobans can now engage in a variety of community activities, including indoor and outdoor recreation, swimming pools, personal services, retail businesses and restaurants.

CLDS participants need to take the same precautions as all other Manitobans in community activities to protect themselves and others from the spread of COVID-19. This includes:

- practicing good hygiene (i.e., hand washing, coughing into their sleeve, avoid touching their face, etc.)
- maintaining physical distancing (i.e., two meters or six feet) except for brief exchanges
- staying at home if they are feeling sick or have any symptoms associated with COVID-19 (i.e., cough, fever, running nose, sore throat, weakness or headache)

Service providers should assist CLDS participants to take these precautions, where necessary.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

While service providers are required to wear a mask while supporting CLDS participants inside shift-staffed homes, they do not need to wear masks or other PPE when supporting participants in the community except:

- when transporting one or more participants in a vehicle,
- when physical distancing cannot be maintained,
- when providing personal intimate care as per routine practice (e.g., contact with blood or bodily fluids), or
- if a participant becomes ill or begins showing symptoms associated with COVID-19 during the community activity.

Service providers must wear a mask when transporting one or more participants in a vehicle. The mask may be removed when they arrive to the community activity if physical distancing can be maintained, but must be put back on when transporting the participant(s) back home.

Service providers do not need to wear masks if physical distancing can be maintained during the community activity. If a mask is deemed necessary:

- limit the number of times masks are removed during a shift as this increases risks of transmission,
- remove and discard masks at the end of a shift,
- use one mask per shift and change only if it becomes wet, damp, damaged or soiled and
- store masks in a clean paper bag or envelope labeled with the service provider's name.

Service providers do not need to wear gloves except when providing personal intimate care as per routine practice. If gloves are required:

- never reuse or wash disposable gloves,
- remember that gloves do not replace the need for hand hygiene,
- practise hand hygiene before putting on gloves and after removing them and
- change gloves when they become visibly soiled.

If a participant becomes ill or begins showing symptoms associated with COVID-19 during the community activity, follow these guidelines:

- wear a face mask,
- encourage the participant to wear a mask and
- transport the participant back to their residence or a testing site.

If transporting an ill or symptomatic participant back to their residence or a testing site in a vehicle:

- transport the participant alone in the vehicle, unless there is another care provider accompanying the participant,
- transport the participant in the vehicle with the windows open (weather permitting), and
- thoroughly disinfect the vehicle immediately after the transport.

Upon returning the ill or symptomatic participant to their home:

- isolate the participant,
- wear full PPE including masks, gloves, gowns and eye protection and
- contact Health Links at 204-788-8200 or 1-888-316-9257 for additional guidance.

Masks

There are two primary reasons why service providers are required to wear masks when supporting CLDS participants in shift-staffed homes and when transporting individuals in a vehicle, but not when engaging in community activities (unless physical distancing cannot be maintained). It can be difficult to maintain physical distancing inside a home or vehicle. Secondly, the supports provided to participants in their home are different than what is provided in community settings.

Managing Risk

The vulnerability and health risks of CLDS participants remains an important consideration. Service providers should seek medical advice for participants who may be at higher risk of contracting COVID-19 or at higher risk of serious illness before supporting them in community activities.

Please visit www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restoring/index.html for information on Manitoba's plan to restore safe services and the current list of community activities that all Manitobans can safely engage in.

If you have any questions, please contact your Leading Program and Practice Specialist.

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cc: Distribution List