

Attention: Northwood Home Care Employees

March 12, 2020

Northwood is activating our pandemic plan to prepare and respond to the recent Novel Coronavirus (COVID – 19). There are no identified cases of COVID – 19 in Nova Scotia to date, however there continues to be Influenza activity.

The following measures are being implemented:

Staff who have travelled outside of Canada are to contact the Occupational Health Nurse at 902 454 3354, during after hours your Supervisor or the on-call Supervisor prior to returning to work. Staff will be screened via telephone based on symptoms and instructed on precautions to take prior to returning to work. Being a health care worker we are aware of the risks associated with coming to work while experiencing active respiratory symptoms. There is neither a vaccine nor medical treatment for COVID – 19 and to assist the recovery of at-risk group such as elderly.

• **Heighten Respiratory Surveillance:** When caring for clients please notify your supervisor if your client has respiratory symptoms. If the client or family advises they have travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days please contact your supervisor. Masks maybe required for clients we are working with Department of Health and Wellness on required precautions.

• **Increased Environmental Disinfection** is important to consider when you are in the client's home. General home disinfectants are sufficient to disinfect frequently touched surfaces.

• **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** (masks, gowns, eye shields) supplies are monitored daily and replenishment. We have sufficient stock to respond to respiratory illnesses. Should an outbreak be identified, we will work with Department of Health and Wellness to secure additional PPE if required.

PPE is available in your PPE kit. Please let your supervisor know if you require replacement supplies. The on-call supervisor will advise where to access supplies should they be needed after hours.

• **PPE Training** it is essential that PPE are put on and taken off correctly. An education module is available on the Hub and all staff are expected to complete the module. Reviewing proper hand hygiene technique is important as well. If you have any questions please contact your supervisor.

• **Communication and Information:** Information will continue to be updated on the HUB regularly. Northwood will continue to be transparent with information and will work in collaboration with the Department of Health and Wellness and Public Health Services.

Daily provincial updates are available at: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/>

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