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Plan for Return to Clinical Practice in Respect of Covid-19

This plan was developed with the goal of reducing the risk of exposure to the virus that causes Covid-19 for both clients and the practitioners within our clinical setting. Here, we identify the actions that the therapists at Back to Health Center commits to, and that all visiting clients must commit to, in order to resume massage therapy services.

“Coronavirus is transmitted via liquid droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. The virus can enter via these droplets through the eyes, nose and throat if you are in close contact.

The virus is not known to be airborne (e.g. transmitted through particles floating in the air) and it is not something that comes in through the skin.

It can be spread by touch if a person has used their hands to cover their mouth or nose when they cough. That is why we recommend you cough or sneeze into your arm and wash your hands regularly.”

Source: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/disease-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/how-it-spreads>

The overall aim to these protocols is to reduce potential coronavirus transmission by:

- Required ongoing self-assessment for signs of Covid-19 related illness in both the client and the therapist
- Reduce all physical, non-therapeutic related interactions amongst all people within the practice environment
- Hand hygiene requirements
- Avoid face touching
- Enhanced cleaning protocols
- Appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Meeting professional obligations, particularly related to informed consent and liability insurance

Self-Assessment for Symptoms of Covid-19: For Clients & Therapists

Pre-Screening / Prior to Arrival

- Clients will be informed about their responsibilities at the time of booking. A notice will be placed on the website informing clients of these protocols as well as of a Covid-19 specific consent form they will be required to sign prior to arrival. Hard copies will be provided at the front desk if needed.
- One day prior to their booked appointment, the patient will be required to complete the online BC Covid-19 Symptom Self-Assessment tool and to stay home if they experience any symptoms of Covid-19.
 - The tool can be found here: <http://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>
- The therapist's office will phone the client one day before (or last business day before) their booked appointment to discuss using the self-assessment tool and to verify that it has been done.
- The therapist will use the BC Covid-19 Self-Assessment tool themselves, daily and commits to canceling all appointments if symptoms appear.
- Symptoms of Covid-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses and seasonal allergies. An appointment must be cancelled immediately if either the client or the therapist presents with symptoms that may be signs of Covid-19 including:
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Chills
 - Shortness of breath
 - Sore throat or pain with swallowing
 - Stuffy or runny nose
 - Loss of sense of smell
 - Headache
 - Muscle aches
 - Fatigue
 - Loss of appetite
- As part of this consent form, clients must commit to understanding that while we have taken all possible measures to minimize risk of viral transmission, the nature of massage therapy means that physical distancing is not possible in the treatment room.
- In order for massage therapy treatment to commence the therapist and client must agree that the therapeutic benefit of massage therapy outweighs any potential consequence of treatment, including the possibility of viral transmission.
- Clients must confirm that they have not been in contact with anyone who has displaying illness, or signs and symptoms of Covid-19 within 14 days prior to their treatment.
- Clients with higher risk profiles and/or weakened immune systems should consider alternatives for care and postpone treatment.
 - The client and the therapist must both agree that the benefits of massage therapy outweigh the potential risks involved.
- Clients who develop even mild illness or symptoms should cancel booked appointments, even without notice.
 - They will not be charged a late cancellation fee if they cancel due to illness.

Upon Arrival

- The therapist will advise clients of their current Self-Assessment results upon their arrival at the clinic. Clients will be asked to share their own results.
- Upon arrival clients must confirm that they have done a pre-screening and have no signs of Covid-19 as outlined here: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/symptoms>

- Masks may be worn by clients at their discretion. If the client does not have a mask, a mask will be provided.
- Clients must confirm that they have not travelled outside British Columbia within 14 days prior to their appointment.
- The treatment will be cancelled immediately if the client does not meet the pre-screening criteria upon physical presentation at the clinic.

Physical Distancing

Reception Area / Entry into Clinic Space

- The therapists, clinic staff and clients must maintain a space of 2 meters (6 feet) distance between each other in all clinic areas outside the treatment room.
- The fabric chairs have been removed from the reception area and replaced with furniture that can be sanitized.
 - Clients are not permitted to lounge in the clinic reception area before or after the treatment.
- Water dispensers have been removed and clients must bring their own water bottles.
- Nothing remains in the clinic space that cannot be disinfected after each touch.
- Appointment times are staggered to reduce the potential of clients crossing paths, and to allow for time in-between appointments for enhanced cleaning.
- Clients are asked to arrive on time and not early or late for appointments.
- After payment, clients will be asked to proceed to their designated treatment rooms to limit the number of people in the clinic waiting area.

Within the Treatment Room

- Only 1 client/person is permitted in the treatment room at any given time.
 - Minors are allowed to be accompanied by one parent or guardian
- It is not possible to maintain physical distancing while in the treatment room.
- Clients will be asked to keep all personal belongings within a plastic bin provided, which will be sanitized after each treatment.

Restrooms for Client Use

- Soap and fresh paper towels for drying will be available at all times.
- A waste bin has been placed outside the bathroom door so the client may use a paper towel to open the door and discard it while entering the clinic space.

Hand Hygiene

Reception Area / Entry into Clinic Space

- Immediately upon entering the clinic space the client must either:
 - Go directly to the sink in the restroom without touching anything inside the clinic and wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and then dry thoroughly, or
 - Use the hand sanitizer provided at the front desk.
- If hands are visibly soiled, the client must opt to wash hands using the sink in the restroom.
- The therapist will wash hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds between client treatments, after disinfecting treatment space and changing over linen, as well as donning or doffing other PPE (gloves, facemasks, aprons).
- Hand washing protocols will be posted visibly in the reception.

- Payment occurs in the reception area. Cash or cheques will not be accepted at this time. A POS system with Tap is available for card use. The POS system is wrapped with plastic wrap and is sanitized after each use. POS receipts are provided if requested.
- If clients are submitting their own claims a paper receipt will be issued.

In the Treatment Room

- The therapist will close the door after entering the treatment room to help reduce the need for the client to touch the door.
 - clients will be permitted to open the door for themselves after the treatment to let themselves out of the treatment room.
 - Tissues are available inside the treatment room that the client may use as a barrier when opening the door.
 - The doorknobs will be disinfected between each client.

Avoid Face Touching

- The therapist will communicate with the client that coronavirus can be transmitted by touch if droplets are on the hand when touching the face, as it can transfer those infected droplets to the mouth, nose or eyes.
- Tissues will be provided throughout the clinic: in the reception area and treatment rooms.
- Clients are encouraged to wear face masks that cover their nose and mouth within the clinic space.
- Intraoral TMJ treatments will not be conducted at this time.

Enhanced Cleaning

- Additional time has been scheduled between clients to allow for thorough cleaning and sanitization of the treatment room.
- Visibly soiled surfaces will be cleaned followed by disinfection with a Canada Health Approved for use against Covid-19 disinfectant as listed here: <http://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>
- Common areas will be cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day, including the restroom.
- All high touch surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected regularly, regardless of appearance. High touch surfaces include (but not limited to):
 - Light switches, door knobs, POS machine, electronic devices, table surfaces, chairs, stools, window coverings, faucets, etc.
 - The treatment table, table levers, face cradle, lotion bottles will be disinfected immediately after each treatment.
 - No thermophores, table warmers or table covers will be used.
 - A Cleaning and Disinfectant for Clinic Setting Poster will be displayed in the reception area and treatment room.
- All linens, including blankets, pillow cases, and towels are single use only and will be laundered using hot water and detergent between each use.
- A disinfected plastic bin has been placed in the treatment room. The client will be asked to keep all of their personal belongings in this bin during the treatment. Post treatment, this same bin will be used to carry used linen to the laundry room for washing.
- Bins will be disinfected between each treatment.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- The therapist will wear a face mask at the request of the client or if the therapist feels the need to.
- The therapist will wear non-latex gloves if/when appropriate.
- Clients are encouraged to provide and wear a face mask while in the clinic.

- If the client does not have a face mask a cleaned fabric face mask will be provided.

Professional Obligations

Liability Insurance

- The therapist carries professional liability insurance through Lackner McLennan Insurance Ltd required by the College of Massage Therapy of BC.

In the Event That a Therapist Suspect Covid-19 Contraction

- All massage therapy appointments will be cancelled and the therapist will cease to provide services until Public Health has investigated and provided direction.
- The therapist will immediately self-isolate until Public Health has investigated and provided direction
- If a client alleges the therapist caught Covid-19 from the therapist the infected will immediately call public health at 8-1-1 to report the alleged transmission, providing both the name of the RMT and the name and contact details of the patient.

Asymptomatic Spreaders

- Asymptomatic transmission of the coronavirus is an unavoidable risk of practice until we've acquired herd immunity, there is an effective treatment or vaccine against Covid-19.
- We have put into place protocols to help mitigate the risk as outlined in the preceding documentation.

Informed Consent

In the current environment of Covid-19 risk, informed consent requires that the patient be informed and understands that:

- Any massage therapy treatment involves some risk of Covid-19 transmission;
- The therapist is following protocols to help reduce or mitigate risk where possible, but that risk cannot be reduced to zero;
- The patient consents to the treatment despite some risk;
- And the therapist will document the patient's consent in advance and at every treatment.