MEMO

DATE: 3/27/2020
TO: Community and Family Physicians
FROM: Dr. John Froh, SHA Physician Pandemic Lead
RE: PPE for Community Clinics, COVID-19 testing Sites, COVID-19 Assessment and Treatment Sites

PPE for Community Clinics

The Saskatchewan Health Authority’s number one priority is the safety of our employees, physicians, patients and residents. PPE is a critical component of the SHA’s response to COVID-19. There is a worldwide shortage and we recognize this is concerning for all.

Infection prevention and Control (IPAC), Occupational Health and Safety (OHS), and Supply Chain are working on the following to source PPE for the province:

- Development of site-based models to better distribute and monitor PPE supply levels.
- Orders with vendors for PPE, including disposable and reusable items.
- Analysis of pandemic supplies of PPE for distribution and use.
- Exploring industries outside health care for additional PPE.
- Receiving and allocating donations of PPE.
- Exploring innovative opportunities.

Due to supply shortages and in preparation for a surge in COVID-19 infections within the acute care setting, orders for PPE from primary care physicians will not be filled.

In order to preserve the supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for those caring for acutely ill patients, we recommend that physicians do as much COVID-19 phone screening or virtual care as possible. If a patient with suspected COVID-19 symptoms arrives unannounced at the clinic, screening is to take place with the patient in their vehicle or from a distance of six feet.

Assessment of patients suspected to have contracted COVID-19 should not occur in physicians’ offices.

Assessment centers are being stood up across the province and information on these sites will be shared regularly.

The purpose of the COVID Assessment and Treatment Site is to provide intermediate care, assessment and treatment for individuals presenting with escalating symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or those confirmed positive with COVID-
19 in conjunction with comorbid health conditions. It is the Saskatchewan Health Authority’s goal to assist general practitioners, clinics, family physicians and emergency departments from becoming overwhelmed by people who are symptomatic. In some cases, clinics and family physicians may not have the space to isolate patients or have the recommended Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for safety. In these cases, diverting referrals to an assessment site rather than emergency is preferable. For EMS, and HealthLine 811, it will present another option when referring people for medical attention.

Significant work is underway on virtual care, algorithms for community physicians and pathways. More information will be shared as soon as it is finalized.

For more information on virtual care options and billing codes, please visit https://saskatchewan.ca/covid19-providers. This site also has resources for community and family physicians, including a COVID-19 clinic triage algorithm and clinic posters (For Patients: STOP and Read Before Entering, Social Distancing – Reminder for Patients) as well as referral process for test sites.