



Personal Choice Independent Living/
Choix personnel vie autonome

OFC - 520 Bronson Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, K1R 7Y9, (613) 238-2723

To: All Clients, Caregivers and Family Members

Date: March 16, 2019

From: PCIL management and Board of Directors

Subject: **PCIL Precautionary Measures** in Response to COVID-19

This is a challenging time around the world and here at home. Knowing that you might have concerns, I want to reassure you that we at PCIL are working hard to ensure clients and staff stay healthy.

The safety and well-being of clients and staff is always a top priority. I want to make you aware of the precautions that PCIL/CPVA is taking to protect you and our staff members.

We are informed with the most up-to-date information

Here at PCIL, we receive daily updates and direction from Ottawa Public Health and various levels of government as the situation evolves. PCIL's pandemic and emergency plans have been well informed by our experience providing service through the outbreaks of coronavirus SARS (2003), H1N1 influenza (2009) and the annual flu.

Our employees are trained to prevent the spread of infections. And, the Care Coordinators and Team Leaders are currently taking additional training in infection prevention and control to improve their level of knowledge.

Additional measure for your safety

- Hand Hygiene - staff have been instructed to enhance their hand hygiene practices. They will always hand sanitize before your service booking. We want you to feel assured of this. So, when staff arrive to provide your care, you should feel free to ask staff if they have washed their hands, or to ask them to wash their hands in front of you.

- Post-break screening – if any staff or client has had a break (eg. vacation) from their regular service or work schedule, we are using the screening tool provided by the Ontario Ministry of Health. This screening tool asks about travel and contact with anyone who is infected or experiencing symptoms. If anyone has travelled outside Canada, we will welcome them back to service or work after the 14 days self-isolation period.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – PCIL has a supply of PPE that is available for staff to use with clients who have a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19. WE are monitoring the use of these supplies so that we can maintain appropriate stock – and we are staying informed about the approach the province is taking to ensure that PPE can be directed to the areas of highest need/exposure risk.
- Essential visitors only in Supportive Housing – the Chief Medical Officer of Ontario has issued a directive to all health service providers to limit the risk to safety of vulnerable clients living in a group setting. ‘Essential visitors’ are defined as healthcare professionals and PCIL staff.
- No New Clients – at this time, we are not accepting any new clients onto any PCIL service. This is to reduce risk of spread of infection to clients and to staff.
- Support to Staff – we, at PCIL and elsewhere, work in healthcare to support people through their health journey. We want to be there for you, but only when we are at our best. Accordingly, we screen all staff to ensure they have not travelled or are at risk of COVID-19 infection. If they have travelled or been exposed, they will not return to work for a 14 day isolation period. If staff are simply not feeling well, they are advised to self-isolate and remain at home.

Be involved in your healthcare.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – Given the international demand for PPE, we request that clients who purchase gloves and other PPE for staff to use as part of your regular service delivery, monitor supply levels. The supply chain for PPE in general is limited right now. If you have difficulty maintaining adequate supplies because of supplier back-log, please let PCIL management know to that we can flag concerns with the provincial table that is monitoring PPE distribution.

COVID symptoms - If you are experiencing symptoms associated with COVID-19, please contact your health service provider for guidance. It is your responsibility to inform PCIL management as well. We will take precautionary measures as directed by PCIL’s emergency management plan and Ottawa Public Health.

We have been actively monitoring the return of staff and clients from recent international travel and responding accordingly. Depending on the responses, staff may be asked to take a variety of actions which could include not returning to work for a specified period of time.

Should staffing levels become significantly impacted, we will inform you. If this happens, we will need to focus on providing 'essential services' and may need to modify or reduce the service of some clients.

Back-Up Plan – you should have an emergency back-up plan in the event that PCIL is unable to provide some/all of your service.

We are committed to providing you updates as this situation continues to evolve.

If you have any questions, concerns or if there is anything we can assist with at this time, please contact your Care Coordinator or the PCIL General Manager at 613-238-2723.