

INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT FOR CARE OF INDIVIDUALS WITH SUSPECT OR CONFIRMED COVID-19 IN GROUP LIVING RESIDENCES

Key Findings

- Droplet and Contact Precautions are recommended for supporting residents with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. Personal protective equipment that may be required include:
 - Facial protection such as surgical masks and N95 respirators (N95 respirators are not needed unless performing an aerosol generating procedure)
 - Eye protection such as safety glasses, face shields or masks with visor attachments,
 - Gloves, and/or
 - Isolation gowns.
- No personal protective equipment is required for supporting residents who are asymptomatic.
 - Strategies for providers to implement to reduce the risk of acute respiratory illness transmission are to continue to practice [physical distancing](#).

Background

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses known to cause illness ranging from the simple common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). COVID-19 which was originally identified in Wuhan, China is a new (novel) strain that experts are learning more about every day. More information can be found on www.york.ca/COVID19

Knowledge about COVID-19 is continually evolving and what is currently known to date is:

- COVID-19 cases and clusters demonstrate that Droplet/Contact transmission are the routes of transmission.
- The majority of cases are linked to person-to-person transmission through close direct contact with someone who is positive for COVID-19.
- There is no evidence that COVID-19 is transmitted through the airborne route.

Purpose

The personal protection of individuals in group living residences where support and care is provided is vital. Group living residences in York Region include:

- Group Homes
- Lodging House
- Homes for Special Care
- Children Residences

PUBLIC HEALTH

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york.ca/covid19

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Adapted from Public Health Ontario



Objective

This summary of recommendations document is intended to support the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) planning and varied recommendations for the following groups who may be present at group living residences:

1. **Visitors/Volunteers** who are individuals that may enter group living residences to support programs and services,
2. **Staff** employed in group living residences, and
3. **Residents** of group living residences who rely on these settings for housing, food, and other services

When working with individuals who reside in group living residences and are:

1. **Asymptomatic without exposure to COVID-19**
2. **Asymptomatic with exposure to COVID-19**
3. **Symptomatic with or without exposure to COVID-19**
4. **Symptomatic and test results are pending, negative or positive**

This guidance document provides basic information only and is not intended to take the place of medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.

Please check the Ministry of Health at www.Ontario.ca/covid19 regularly for updates related to this document, case definition, frequently asked questions and other information or visit York Region website at www.york.ca/covid19.

As additional evidence emerges, this document will be amended.

Self-Isolation Recommendations and Discharge Guidance

Resident Description	Self-Isolation Requirement
Without symptoms AND no exposure	No self-isolation requirement. Provide reassurance and refer them to COVID-19 websites www.york.ca/covid19 and www.Ontario.ca/covid19 . A self-assessment tool is available online for all individuals to complete in case they develop symptoms.
Without symptoms AND with exposure	Provide information on continued self-monitoring and self-isolation for 14 days from exposure risk. If symptoms develop then follow guidelines below
With symptoms AND no known exposure to COVID-19	Should self-isolate for 14 days after onset of symptoms.
With symptoms AND exposure to COVID-19	Residence contacts and other close contacts while the individual was ill OR in the 48 hours prior to onset of symptoms should self-isolate for 14 days and monitor their symptoms.
With symptoms and tested for COVID-19 AND results are pending/negative/positive	

*Close contact can result from: providing care for a positive case (e.g., healthcare workers, family members or other caregivers), living with a case, or having similar close physical, or prolonged face-to-face contact with a positive case while the case was ill.

Personal Protective Equipment

PPE is the most visible control precaution against COVID-19 transmission **but should not be** relied on as a stand-alone primary prevention strategy.

PPE refers to the availability, support and appropriate use of physical barriers between a person and an infectious agent/infected source to minimize exposure and prevent transmission. Examples of PPE barriers include:

- Protection such as surgical masks and N95 respirators,
- Eye protection such as safety glasses, face shields or masks with visor attachments,
- Gloves, and/or
- Isolation gowns.

York Region Public Health may be able to assist in supporting **initial** access to PPE for group living residences as the need arises, including resources to ensure competency on the appropriate selection, use and disposal of PPE to prevent exposure to infection. Ongoing access and management of PPE will need to be determined by providers.

Resident Accommodations

Residents who are self-isolating should stay in a separate room, away from other people within the facility, as much as possible and use a separate washroom. Residents who are self-isolating should avoid sharing with others any personal items that can come into contact with saliva, such as toothbrushes, eating utensils, cups/bottles, towels, and bedding. They should also wear mask.

Cleaning and disinfecting of all frequently touched surfaces and objects within the self-isolating resident's room should be completed daily, in addition to bathroom and toilet surfaces and any areas that are contaminated with respiratory secretions. Clean with detergent (soap) and water and then disinfect with an over the counter disinfectant. Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces and objects within the facility (kitchens, common areas, dining areas, desks, shared sleeping spaces, doorknobs, and faucets) is also imperative.

Summary of PPE Recommendations

This summary of recommendations is intended to inform minimum expectations for PPE. However, group living residences should follow their own institutional or organizational infection prevention and control policies and procedures on PPE.

Asymptomatic Individuals in Group Living Residences		
Individual	Activity	Type of PPE or Procedure
Staff	All	No PPE equipment required Staff, volunteers and residents should continue strategies to reduce the risk of acute respiratory transmission
Visitors/Volunteers		
Residents		

Confirmed Positive and/or Symptomatic Individuals in Group Living Residences

Individual	Activity	Type of PPE or Procedure
Staff	Providing direct care to suspect or confirmed COVID-19 residents	Droplet and Contact precautions, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgical/procedure mask • Isolation gown • Gloves • Eye protection
	Preliminary screening/admitting residents not involving direct contact	If able to maintain spatial distance of at least 2 metres or separation by physical barrier <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No PPE required Otherwise, droplet precautions, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgical/procedure mask • Eye protection
	Administrative tasks that do not involve contact with residents suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No PPE required
	Activities in hallways/areas where residents may be transported or passed through and there is no activity that involves contact with resident suspected or confirmed for COVID-19	Routine practices and Additional Precautions based on risk assessment (anticipated interaction with resident).

Confirmed Positive and/or Symptomatic Individuals in Group Living Residences

Individual	Activity	Type of PPE or Procedure
	Environmental services/cleaning within the resident's room while the resident is in the room	Droplet precautions if coming within 2 meters of the resident, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgical/procedure mask • Eye protection Contact precautions if contact with the resident's environment is anticipated (e.g., bedding, high touch surfaces) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolation gown • Gloves
	Laundry from an unwell resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gloves • Mask Keep laundry away from the body
Visitors/Volunteers	Entering the room of a suspect or confirmed COVID-19 resident should be kept to a minimum	Droplet and Contact precautions, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgical/procedure mask • Eye protection • Isolation gown • Gloves
	Activities in hallways/areas where residents may be transported or pass through, and there is no activity involving contact with symptomatic or confirmed COVID-19 resident	Routine practices and Additional Precautions based on risk assessment (anticipated interaction with resident).

Confirmed Positive and/or Symptomatic Individuals in Group Living Residences		
Individual	Activity	Type of PPE or Procedure
Residents (symptomatic or confirmed to have COVID-19)	Any activity within the isolated setting	<p>Maintain distance of at least 2 metres or separation by physical barrier.</p> <p>Wear surgical/procedure mask if within 2 metres of others (if tolerated).</p> <p>When no mask is worn, cough or sneeze into your sleeve/tissue and perform hand hygiene.</p> <p>Perform hand hygiene frequently and prior to contact with staff/visitors, after washroom use, prior to eating and after coughing and sneezing.</p>

The following resources provide direction on putting on (donning) and taking off (doffing) PPE:

- [Link to PPE Poster](#)
- [Putting on and taking of PPE](#)
- [Poster on how to wear a mask](#)
- [Visit this link for a video on removing PPE safely](#)

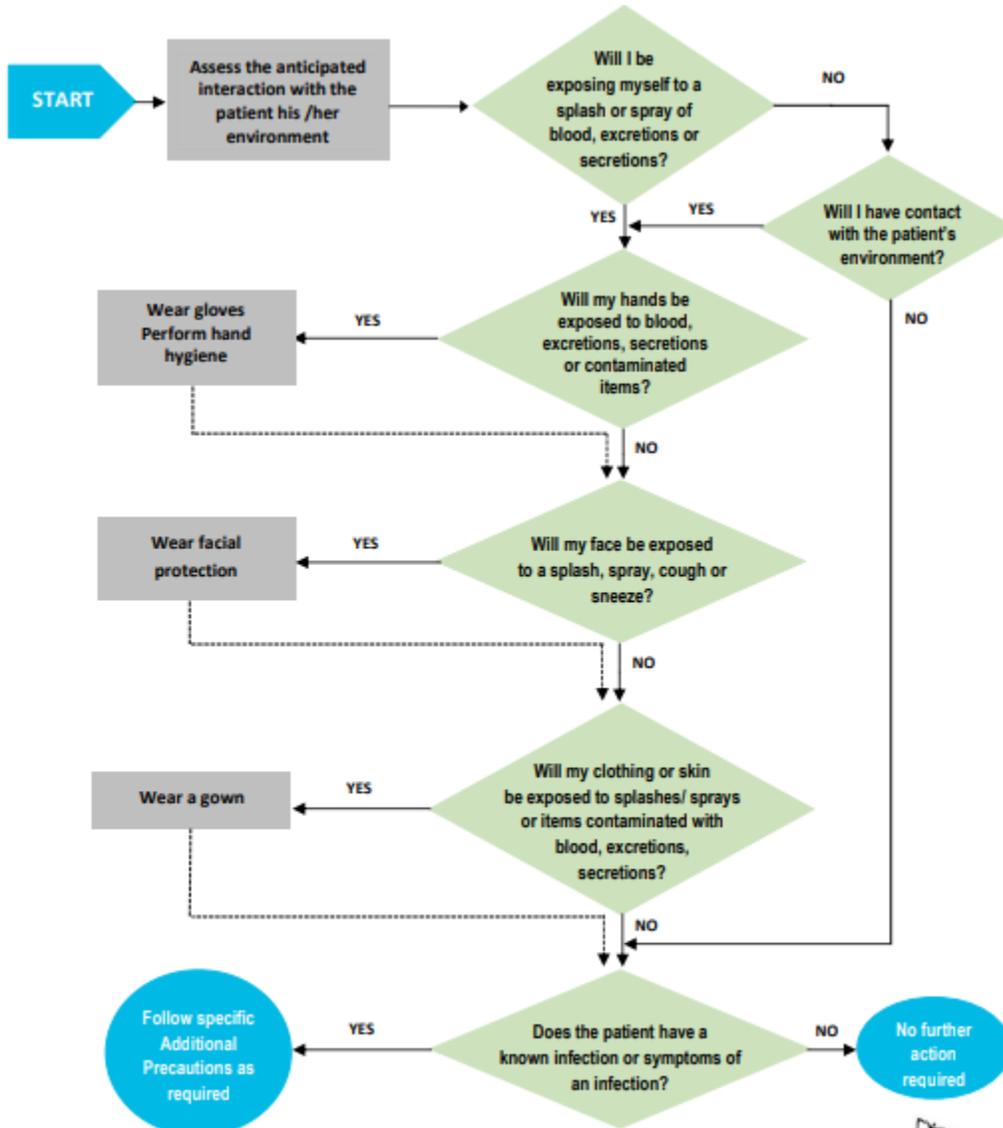
Should the situation arise that PPE is limited or unavailable; providers can refer to the following resources:

- [World Health Organization's Rational use of personal protective equipment for coronavirus diseases \(COVID-19\): Interim Guidance](#)
- [Public Health Ontario Risk Algorithm to Guide PPE Use \(in Appendix A, please use hyperlink for the most current version\)](#)

Or contact York Region Public Health, Infection Prevention and Control Program at 1-800-361-5653.

Appendix A

Risk Algorithm to Guide PPE Use



For more information please contact Public Health Ontario's Infection Prevention and Control Department at



References

- Public Health Ontario. (2020). Risk Algorithm to Guide to PPE Use. Accessed on March 29, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/clinical-office-risk-algorithm-ppe.pdf?la=en>
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- World Health Organization. (2020). Rational use of personal protective equipment for coronavirus disease (COVID-19): interim guidance, 27 February 2020. World Health Organization. <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/331215>. License: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO