

Providing In-person community care in British Columbia During COVID-19

Note: The BCCDC guidance on infection prevention and control for health care providers in community care is expected to be published in the next few days.

Guidance to enable registrants to begin to safely resume providing in-person community care for patients in British Columbia is now available.

Thank you for your patience as we awaited further direction from the Provincial Health Officer. That direction arrived, and we are pleased to share it with you so that you can begin to plan how to safely resume in-person services.

This guidance has been developed by the Provincial Health Officer, the Ministry of Health, the BC Centre for Disease Control and WorkSafeBC in collaboration with BC Health Regulators including the College of Optometrists of British Columbia (“the College”).

With BC now in a position to ease restrictions on health care services [in line with BC’s Restart Plan](#), registrants can begin to resume in-person practice in a way that promotes safe care to patients and, continues to prevent the spread of the virus. As this new normal is being defined, registrants will have to adjust how they deliver care, conduct business, and attend to physical environments to ensure best infection and prevention control practices.

Guidance

The situation regarding COVID-19 will continue to evolve over the coming weeks and months. The guidance provided reflects the best evidence available at this time and it will change as required to reflect updates in our understanding of COVID-19 and its transmission.

Resources that are linked to in the guidance are also subject to change. This means registrants need to be prepared for updates and closely watch for communications from the College, as well as updated guidance from the Provincial Health Officer, BC Centre for Disease Control and WorkSafeBC.

- **COVID-19: Important Update from the Provincial Health Officer**
- **Providing in-person community care during COVID-19: Guidance for regulated healthcare providers**
- **Guidance on Infection Prevention and Control for Health Care Providers in Community Care (BC Centre for Disease Control)**
Guidance not yet available and is expected to be published by the BCCDC in the next few days
- **Personal Protective Equipment (BC Centre for Disease Control)**
Updates expected following May 19, 2020
- **Health professionals: Protocols for returning to operation (WorkSafeBC)**

Registrants should review all guidance material and carefully consider how to adjust their community practice to ensure the health and safety of their patients and clients, colleagues, and support staff. While in-person services may resume on May 19, there is no requirement to re-open by this date, and registrants must ensure they can practice safely, in line with this guidance before resuming in-person community care services.

Registrants should regularly check the College website, particularly the COVID-19 section, for updates.

Thank you to all registrants for your patience and collaboration as we respond to this pandemic. We are in this together, and the College of Optometrist of BC will continue to support you in providing the best patient care possible in these challenging times.