

Ministry of Health

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Mental Health and Addictions
Division

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Ministère de la Santé

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May 19, 2020

MEMORANDUM TO: All Mental Health and Addiction Service Providers

**FROM: Ragaven Sabaratnam
A/Assistant Deputy Minister**

SUBJECT: Clarification on the Resumption of In-person Service Delivery

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your leadership and continued dedication to the mental health and wellbeing of Ontarians; and to the health and safety of your employees, during this unprecedented time. I am impressed by the flexibility and resolve demonstrated by your organizations.

As announced last week by Premier Ford, the province is amending Directive #2 to permit regulated health professionals to gradually resume in person counselling (and other mental health and addictions service) , if public health pre-conditions are met. Wherever possible, however, virtual service delivery continues to be encouraged.

We know that most of you have continued to provide services during this period of emergency by re-tooling your services to enable virtual delivery via telephone, texting and videoconferencing, where it was feasible. We encourage you to continue to use your clinical judgment and provide these alternative service models, where appropriate.

As you plan for the resumption of in-person services, we will continue to support your efforts to take innovative and pragmatic approaches to keep Ontarians supported, all while following public health guidance. For guidance specific to the community-based and residential mental health and addictions sector, please refer to the following links:
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_MHAS_Community_guidance.pdf

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_MHA_res_guidance.pdf

Additional information and guidance on Ontario's phased re-opening will be shared shortly; and, as always, monitor the Ministry of Health's website for new information as well as the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development.

https://www.ontario.ca/page/resources-prevent-covid-19-workplace?_ga=2.236328071.787265585.1589579185-867769278.1575902324

While preparing to re-open for in person services, health service providers are reminded to follow the hierarchy of controls to eliminate or reduce the risks of transmission, and to minimize their need for PPE. Health service providers and employers should be sourcing PPE through their regular supply chain and they remain responsible for sourcing and providing PPE to their frontline workers. PPE allocation from the provincial pandemic stockpile will continue, and PPE can be accessed, within available supply, on an emergency basis through the established escalation process.

Again, I wish to express my gratitude for your continued commitment to the mental health and wellbeing of Ontarians and the health and safety of your employees, especially during these challenging times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "R. Sabaratnam". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed within a thin blue rectangular border.

Ragaven Sabaratnam
A/Assistant Deputy Minister
Mental Health and Addictions Division
Ministry of Health