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Manitoba Society of
Occupational Therapists

Determining Essential Services

MSOT Monday Meet-up
Monday, April 6, 2020

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Directive re: non- essential services

- In an effort to reduce community transmission of COVID-19, on Sunday, March 22, 2020, Dr. Brent Roussin, Chief Provincial Public Health Officer, and Lanette Siragusa, Chief Provincial Nursing Officer, issued the directive that **all non-essential and elective health services should immediately cease or be reduced to minimal levels.**
- Allowable exceptions include:
 - emergency services, or
 - time-sensitive services necessary to avert or avoid negative patient outcomes OR to avert or avoid situations that would have direct impact on patient safety.



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Directive re: non- essential services - 2

- **This directive applies to all occupational therapists, including self-employed occupational therapists.** As always, COTM expects occupational therapists to only practise when they can meet practice expectations.
- Employers will determine which services meet the criteria for essential and must be maintained in coordination with this provincial directive. OTs will receive further guidance from their employer regarding their duties.
- For those in independent practice, you need to determine if your services are considered essential. Though COTM is not in the position to assign that label we may be able to assist you to make that decision for your practice.
- **All non-essential and elective health services should immediately cease or be reduced to minimal levels in response to the directive.**



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Essential vs Non-Essential

- Official guidance is evolving rapidly, and there is no one size fits all approach to this question.
- Following are some guiding questions to consider when making clinical judgments and ethical decisions about continuing care with clients.
- Please stay up-to-date on all Government of Manitoba, Shared Health & COTM information



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Essential vs Non-Essential - 2

- What is essential vs. non-essential depends on the circumstances and risks associated with each patient and client population.
- Each client presents with their own unique circumstances.
- Use professional judgement to determine if it is necessary and safe to continue providing service during a period where there is guidance from government to practise social distancing.



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Essential vs Non-Essential - 3

- Manitoba Health (Shared Health) has provided health clinicians with guidance documents and other resources to help determine risk. OTs can conduct a risk assessment with each patient or client to determine if providing service at this time is appropriate.
- Please continue to visit the [Shared Health](#) for the most up-to-date information and check the [COTM COVID-19 page](#) for updates.
- These decisions are complex and ethical in nature and know that in this challenging time, we are all working to ensure the best care possible.



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Essential vs Non-Essential - 4

- Essential strengths Occupational Therapists bring:
 - Ease transition home – and safely support individuals to shorten hospital stay (get out of hospital)
 - Keep people safe in their homes
 - Seating & mobility safety
 - There is a role for OT in critical care (other provinces & nationally also exploring this)



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Questions to Ask yourself

- Have I prioritized clients according to their individual risk?
- What are the possible consequences to the client if I do not provide the service?
- If a client does not receive occupational therapy service at this time will they deteriorate and be at risk for hospitalization or further use of the health care system?
- Can I meet some of the clients needs using alternative means for occupational therapy service, for example, virtual or phone check-in, as a way of bridging service?
- Can I work with my other health system partners and referral sources to identify clients with urgent needs?
- Does my organization have pandemic tools and resources to help me make decisions about service priorities?



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Shared Health Resources

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/providers/>

- Guidance re: In Home care (from March 31, 2020)
 - <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/covid-19-testing-criteria-and-in-home-care.pdf>
- Personal Protective Equipment (updated April 6, 2020)
 - <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/covid-19-provincial-ppe-guidelines.pdf>
 - Do Occupational Therapists have what they need in terms of PPE?
- Protocols for working from home
 - <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/covid-19-staff-protocols-for-remote-access-and-working-from-home.pdf>
- Guidance on outpatient service delivery
 - <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/covid-19-guidance-for-outpatient-care-delivery.pdf>
 - <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/covid-19-guidance-and-screening-tool-for-management-of-home-visits.pdf>



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Some of your questions to COTM...

What telepractice platform does COTM approve for use?

No regulator will provide this information as regulators are not in the position to do this analysis or take the responsibility for this type of decision. Regulators will provide the criteria with which these platforms need to meet. See guidelines from COTM Released on Friday, April 3.

Is my service essential?

Again, members need to review and consider the Government of MB orders and the Shared Health directives. If you are in independent practice and can provide services using virtual / remote means you may be able to continue your services. However, you must consider if services can be provided in a safe, fulsome and effective manner.



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Some more questions to COTM...

Can I be redeployed?

Yes, your employer can move you to other areas in order to assist with the pandemic response. Any other reassignment that is not to support the pandemic response can be reviewed with COTM. Redeployments should not put you at risk and you should not be asked to carry out tasks that you can not do safely or put clients and others at risk. Redeployments should be directed by those with the authority and responsibility to do so.

Can I refuse work?

Occupational safety and health legislation allows workers to refuse work without reprisal if they feel the work is unsafe. You are urged to discuss your concerns and particular situation with your manager / human resources



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Other Questions or Comments?



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Who do people want to be during COVID-19?
OTs can support people to move from fear to growth

Find a purpose
I stop compulsively consuming things that harm me, from food to news.
I think of how I can help others
Use my skills to service the ones in need
I show empathy to myself and others
I identify my emotions
I live in the present and focus in the future
I keep myself emotionally happy and transmit hope
I show gratefulness
I find ways to adapt to changes
I practice calmness, patience, relationships and creativity
I start letting go of things that are out of my control
I make myself aware of the situation and think about the best way to act
I verify information before I share it
I show gratefulness
I acknowledge everyone is trying their best
I transmit my anger and fear related emotions to others
I forward all messages to others
I complain all the time
I hoard food, toilet paper & medicines I don't need
Who do I want to be during COVID-19?

FEAR ZONE LEARNING ZONE GROWTH ZONE

Source unknown

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Advocating for Occupation

- [Staying Happy While At Home: Lessons from Occupational Therapy](#) (source: Vancouver Sun)
- [Adapting to the shift to working & learning from home](#) (source: McGill REPORTER)
- [Normal Life Has Been Disrupted: Managing the disruption of COVID-19](#) (source: Occupational Therapy Australia)
- [5 Tips to Set up a Comfortable Work at Home Space](#) (source: CBC)
- [Mental Health Commission of Canada Resources](#)
- Other ideas, resources?

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Engagement in Living During COVID-19 & Ensuing Occupation Disruptions

(source: CAOT)

"As occupational therapists, we have the resources and knowledge to cope in the presence of uncertainty; to choose healthy occupations that contribute to our self-care and the wellbeing of our families; to foster interpersonal connections and a sense of belonging; to find new ways to fulfil important roles; and to discover the occupations that can provide structure, routine and meaning within our disrupted lives. And we have the opportunity to make a contribution to our nation's wellbeing by sharing what we know with others"

- Karen Whalley Hammell

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Next Monday: Telepractice

Resources until then:

- COTM Practice Guidelines – https://cotm.ca/upload/Telepractice_Guidance_Document.pdf
- CAOT Exchange Forum – <https://www.caot.ca/site/pt/COVID-19?nav=sidebar#Forum>
- BMS Insurance Webinar and [sample telehealth consent form](#) – https://www.caot.ca/document/7154/COVID-19_Telehealth%20Resource_2020.pdf
– [CAOT Insurance: Managing practice risk during COVID-19](#)
– [Telehealth: Practical considerations](#)

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Thank You!

Upcoming Events:

MSOT Monday Meet-ups – weekly on Zoom 8-9 pm
(Future topics to be announced)

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