

**Yukon Communicable Disease Control
#4 Hospital Road, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 3H8**

Memorandum

Date: 2020-09-16

20-16

To: All Health Care Providers

From: Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) & Yukon Communicable Disease Control (YCDC)

Subject: COVID provider update #14

Dear Colleagues:

We are now well into the first month of school reopening and pleased to see that overall children and staff are settling into COVID-19 modified ways of learning and gathering.

One of the more challenging areas has been in what advice to give parents and families when children have mild illness. We know that COVID-19 presentations, although generally mild, can vary from asymptomatic to severe amongst children. We also know that children face many other viruses throughout the school year. Balancing the desire to prevent COVID introduction into schools, while optimizing school attendance for children and minimizing unnecessary disruption to families is our main goal in working toward consistent guidance and messages.

In developing these guidelines, we have scanned the literature for symptoms in children that are more or less commonly associated with COVID-19 presentations, and reviewed other jurisdictions' guidance in how they are approaching this important issue. With this in mind, we have two separate age groupings and products for the public and providers. One is a public document that outlines for parents how to distinguish between higher risk and lower risk symptoms for COVID-19, and when it is okay to go back to resume regular activities, such as going to school or work. It also provide direction for actions if persons are electing to not be tested. See documents attached.

Providers will notice a change from 14 to 10 days of self-isolation within these documents. As a territory, we will be updating the written direction related to removal of isolation of cases within the guidance document, *COVID-19 public health management of cases and contacts* shortly.

Our approach to support parents is through a “traffic light” model that can help parents to screen children for school attendance.

“**GREEN**” means child is well with no symptoms and can attend school. This zone also includes situations where the symptoms are consistent with a previously diagnosed health condition and are not unusual for that individual. No assessment or note is required from a health care provider.

“**YELLOW symptoms**” means there are symptoms such as a runny nose, a headache, or fatigue, which mean the child or adult, should withdraw from school/work, stay at home for 24 hours and see whether symptoms progress or resolve. This category also includes how to approach multiple and persisting “yellow” symptoms.

“**RED symptoms**” that involve new onset of cough, fever, or difficulty breathing where COVID testing is encouraged along with assessment by health care provider as needed.

There are always going to be grey areas as well as areas where your clinical judgement will be required. We also want to ensure that testing is always accessible and available to help with decisions. Generally speaking, testing for COVID-19 is the fastest way to support return to regular activities. We also believe that low risk mild respiratory symptoms that resolve rapidly are very unlikely to represent COVID given our present situation.

This is also a time to remember that as always a differential diagnosis is so important, and that common illnesses (tonsillitis, strep throat, etc) continue to prevail.

We understand that further tweaks to this guidance may be necessary as our experience accrues and as we learn from other jurisdictions.

The following clinical guidance documents have been updated:

- Frequently Asked Questions: COVID-19 Testing and Clinical Management (September 16, 2020)
 - Updated to reflect isolation in families and increased consistency
- COVID-19 patient handout, Home isolation (September 16, 2020)
 - Updated to include results timeline and clarification on *How to help prevent transmission in my home?*

The following clinical guidance documents are new:

- Decision support tool for testing recommendations and return to regular activities (ie work, school, recreation) for mild acute illness.
 - Note different grouping of “**YELLOW symptoms**” based on age due to symptom presentation variation by age group and age based variations in management

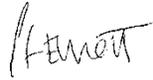
- Interim Guidance for Mass Clinics During the COVID-19 Pandemic (September 16, 2020)
 - Provides clinical direct for large clinics such as influenza immunization, including consideration for location, set-up and COVID-19 screening. Please note additional direction surrounding PPE for providers and the public will be released shortly.

Thank you for your support and for your participating in keeping our children and families healthy and safe.

Thank you,



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