



COVID-19

Adult Day Program

Guidelines

Health and Wellness
July 2021

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Purpose

Across the province, Adult Day Programs provide programming, respite, and social opportunities to many Nova Scotians.

This document is intended to provide Adult Day Program providers with mandatory and recommended activities that are needed to safely open programs to participants. This resource is also intended to provide up-to-date information on how to manage the risk of COVID-19 within Adult Day Programs and coordinate a timely response in the event there is a COVID-19 exposure within the program setting.

Please note that this is a supplemental resource and does not supersede existing directives from the Department of Health and Wellness or the [Health Protection Act Order](#) of the Chief Medical Officer of Health. This document is based on the latest available scientific evidence and expert opinion about COVID-19 and may change as new information becomes available.

This document will be updated when there is a change in the Order, Directive and/or restrictions.

Any participant residing in the community or in long term care is able to attend Adult Day programming. There are no limits on Adult day participants based on vaccination status- fully vaccinated, partially vaccinated and non-vaccinated participants may attend programming.

SECTION 1: Creating a Safe Space for In-Person Adult Day Programming

Planning for participants will be completed before in-person programming can resume. Ensure that programs are offered in ways that protect and support the participants, volunteers, and staff to adhere to public health guidelines, while also balancing participant needs.

Update staff, volunteer, and participant information

- Create and maintain a staff (including casual) and volunteer list including:
 - Date of birth, email address, cell phone number
 - Other programs or facilities where the staff member is working (e.g. long-term care, home care agencies, other)
- Create and maintain a participant log containing the following information:
 - Name, contact information (phone number and email address), date of birth
 - Emergency contact information with name, phone number, and email address
 - Program participation date(s)/times

This information ensures providers are prepared to communicate with other staff, volunteers, families, and Public Health quickly and effectively in the event a participant becomes ill with COVID-19 related symptoms and will expedite the contact tracing process. COVID-19 immunization is recommended for both participants and staff.

Prepare for Programming

- Adult Day Program providers will ensure the physical environment where programming is offered complies with the required Public Health measures. If using a rented space, ensure that the building owner/landlord is following cleaning protocols outlined in section 2.5 of the [COVID-19 Management in Long Term Care Facilities Directive](#). If the current site is not able to accommodate Public Health measures, determine if an alternate site is available.
- Programs in acute care or long-term care settings can open if they have a separate programming space, including a washroom.

- Mixing between clients in long term care/ acute care and community based clients is not permitted at this time.
- Program participants must limit, as much as possible, travel through the facility to access programming space. Adult day program participants cannot travel through patient or resident wards/units/households/or neighbourhoods and areas where residents congregate for their own activities.
- Establish policies for excluding participants, staff, and volunteers from attendance at programming if they are:
 - suspect or confirmed COVID-19, or
 - on self-isolation for potential exposure to COVID-19, or
 - have symptoms of COVID-19
- Review your supply of personal protective equipment (PPE): medical masks, face shields or goggles, gloves, and gowns. Programs will provide medical masks for participants.
- Establish designated areas for program activities. Program providers should consider:
 - Designated outside drop-off and pick-up spaces that are as close to the entrance as possible
 - Staggering drop-off and pick-up times, if needed, to minimize congestion and promote physical distancing
- Establish designated areas for in-person screening to occur on the day of programming for participants, volunteers, and staff.
- Establish a designated space and protocol for staff, volunteers, and participants to perform hand hygiene with either soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub and put on their medical mask. Participants, volunteers, and staff can arrive wearing their own mask and will change to a medical mask supplied by the facility/program, upon arrival.
- Establish a process to populate the participant log with information about the participants, staff and volunteers participating in the program each day.
- Establish appropriate flow for staff, volunteers, and participants within the facility/ building. Install physical markings to show directional flow and identify the required physical distancing.

- Establish designated, secure spaces for staff, volunteers, and participants to store their personal belongings. Participant access to personal storage space should be supervised by staff or volunteers.
- Establish designated markings on the floor to outline where furniture and/or program equipment should be located to promote and ensure physical distancing.
- Remove all items from the space that are not essential for programming. Remove furniture or other items that are not easily and effectively cleaned, where possible.
- A communal water fountain may be used to fill water bottles. No one should drink directly from the fountain.

Note: There may have been little to no water flow through the plumbing water systems within facilities while programs were closed. Therefore, appropriate actions must be taken to reduce the risk of poor water quality (e.g., flushing lines). Guidance on re-opening buildings and flushing water lines can be found at novascotia.ca/coronavirus/resources

- Ensure access to washrooms that are cleaned on a regular basis and stocked with soap, paper towels, hands-free waste receptacles, and toilet paper.
- Have staff/volunteer to participant ratios that support gathering limits and cohorting.

Recommended Actions

- Signage should be placed at all outdoor entrances and where people congregate. Signage should inform staff, volunteers, and participants of:
 - How to do hand hygiene (see Appendix A)
 - Symptoms of COVID-19
 - Physical distancing
 - How to wear non-medical masks (see Appendix B), and
 - Workplace cleaning policies and procedures
- Fans: Industrial fans cannot be used at this time, due to the increased risk for spreading COVID-19. However, portable fans can be used, if required. Fans must be cleaned and maintained on a regular basis, in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
- Open windows to increase ventilation, where possible.

Prepare Staff – Training

- Implement COVID-19 response training. This training should be updated as needed to adapt and comply with changing guidance. Training should cover the following:
 - COVID-19 transmission
 - Not to come to work when sick and get tested if symptoms develop
 - Requirement for adult day program staff who also work in LTC or home care to stop participating in adult day programs if there is an outbreak in either the LTC facility or their home care agency
 - Hand hygiene policies and procedures
 - Cleaning and disinfection policies and procedures, and
 - Information on how to properly put on and remove PPE and to identify when it is required. Resources can be accessed online at the [NSHA COVID Hub](#)

Communicate with Staff and Volunteers

- Ensure all staff and volunteers are educated on and provided with a copy of all procedures.
 - Compile a system to track new staff and volunteers working in your adult day program and that they have completed the required education.
- Create a manual for staff and volunteers that includes: a brief orientation, program overview, and safety precautions. This information should include:
 - Active screening at entry for symptoms of COVID-19 using the 811 list of symptoms, prior to attending programming
 - Masking for staff, volunteers, and participants (please see [Masking](#) section)
 - Hand and respiratory hygiene for staff, volunteers, and participants
 - The importance of maintaining physical distancing, where possible
 - Communicating with program providers in the event staff or volunteers feel ill and need to be absent from programming due to COVID-19 symptoms
 - Clear, detailed steps on where to meet and screen participants, staff and volunteers, and
 - How to safely guide participants to the designated program space

- Develop a process (i.e., who and how) for staff and volunteers to escalate concerns regarding participants not following program guidelines.
- Develop a process for contingencies related to staff illness.

Recommended Actions

- Update website and internal message boards with program opening expectations/plans.
- Cohort staff and volunteers within participant groups to minimize contact with other participants, volunteers, and staff. See also Cohorting/Grouping.

Prepare Your Clients – Communication with Participants and Families

Assess the needs of participants and determine the most appropriate client mix for your program. Ensure participants and families are informed of program expectations. Establish and communicate criteria for determining which participants are eligible to participate in the program, as well as the process for updating their program participation status with families.

Note: Program providers will determine how to best provide programming to participants with moderate or severe dementia and those who may be unable to wear a mask. Consider shortening program days to operate in two, half-day sessions (one morning and one afternoon) to better support continuous masking requirements. Session cohorts need to be consistent.

Providers must ensure participants and their family members are educated on and engaged in discussions regarding modifications to the program to meet Public Health requirements (e.g., screening, masking, physical distancing), participant expectations, and how to capture their concerns moving forward.

Provide information to participants and their families on:

- The need for participants to wear a medical mask for the duration of programming, with potential exceptions on a case-by-case basis and with appropriate accommodation, such as ensuring minimum physical distancing (please see [Masking](#) section for more information).
- Helping the participant become comfortable with wearing a mask.

- Restricting family members from the programming space. It is expected that the participant will be dropped off by a family member at the designated drop-off/pick-up location. If the family member is required to enter the programming space to help settle the participant, they must be masked at all times.

Establish a process to document a participant's needs, such as transportation aids (e.g. wheelchair or walker) and medications. If the participant needs to bring transportation aids from home, the equipment will be disinfected at the drop off location by program staff.

Recommended Actions

- Identify participants at higher risk of severe COVID-19 due to underlying conditions and consider the most appropriate client mix for your program during the initial stage of program re-opening. Those at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 include:
 - those with medical conditions including heart disease, high blood pressure, lung disease, diabetes, and cancer
 - those with cognitive impairment
 - those with weakened immune system, or
 - those over 65 years
- Identify participants who are at higher risk of exposure and transmission of COVID-19 due to situations or behaviours that challenge maintaining public health measures. Consider whether you are able to safely support them during the initial stage of your program re-opening. This could include individuals who:
 - have difficulty understanding or complying with the guidelines, including physical distancing, or
 - require personal care support while attending day programming.

Note: Where possible, assign the same staff member to providing the participant with personal care on the program day.
- Identify participants who are at increased risk to their personal well-being due to decreased social interaction (e.g. household conflict, caregiver burnout, mental health issues) or for whom day programming activities may be their only source of interactions with others, and determine if you are able to safely support them during the initial stage of your reopening.
 - Due to restrictions at this time, program providers may want to begin with re-enrolling participants with early cognitive impairment first, or participants who can more easily meet the participation guidelines.

SECTION 2: Maintaining a Safe Space

Carefully following Public Health Measures will help everyone stay safe by helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Ensure that staff, volunteers, support workers, and participants understand and are provided with up-to-date information on Public Health Measures including physical distancing, masking, hand and respiratory hygiene, and environmental cleaning.

For more information about general Public Health Measures, visit novascotia.ca/coronavirus/avoiding-infection.

Program providers must have a process to handle situations of non-compliance with guidelines and program specific protocols.

Screening

On the day of programming, all staff, volunteers, and participants must be screened for symptoms of COVID-19 using the [811-assessment tool](#) prior to entering the Adult Day programming space

- Staff and volunteer screening must be completed prior to the beginning of each shift and before they meet or support program participants.
- Participants must be screened on the day of programming.
- Staff and volunteer screening information will be reported to the program providers daily.

No participant will be able to access or attend programming and no individual will be able to transport the participant to programming if they are exhibiting any signs or symptoms of COVID-19, or have COVID-19, as determined using the screening procedure.

A program participant, staff or volunteer, or someone transporting a participant to the program, who has a chronic stable cough, sneeze, runny nose, or nasal congestion that is unchanged and clearly linked to a known medical condition such as asthma or allergies may still be able to access programming or transport the participant to programming.

Note: if the program provider cannot determine if the individual is presenting with a pre-existing condition, the individual should not participate in programming and should be asked to call 811 for further assessment.

Screening logs must be stored for 4 weeks.

See also [Section 5: Reporting Illness](#).

Masking

Participants, staff and volunteers must wear a medical mask for the duration of the programming. Medical masks will be provided by the program.

Participants must wear a medical mask, except for the following situations:

- Participants may remove their mask for drinking and eating and for the purpose of medication administration. Physical distancing must be maintained when masks are removed.
- For outdoor programming, once in the designated outdoor area, the mask may be removed at the discretion of the provider, if the provider's procedures allow for the removal of masks, if physical distancing is maintained, and there is a means for safe storage or disposal of the mask.
- If the use of masks by participants is not possible, participants may not attend the program at this time.

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing will help reduce the spread of COVID-19. This means limiting contact with other people and maintaining a physical distance of 2 metres/6 feet or more from others as much as possible.

It is recognized that following physical distancing guidelines may be difficult for some participants. This should not prohibit them from participating. Best efforts should be made to maintain consistent groups and physical distancing, acknowledging it is always not possible.

Program providers will clearly communicate physical distancing expectations to families, volunteers, and staff.

Gathering limits

Gathering Limits as outlined in the Public Health Order will apply at all times and must include participants, staff and volunteers. Please continue to consult the Public Health Order for gathering limits as restrictions adjust.

Cohorting/Grouping

Staff, volunteers, and participants should be cohorted in a consistent group. This means maintaining a consistent group of staff, volunteers and participants who attend the program together on a regular basis. Within each group, physical distancing is encouraged, but not required, if masks are worn at all times.

With individuals who are outside a consistent group, or with other groups, everyone must ensure physical distancing of two (2) metres between themselves and others, as much as possible.

Physical distancing of at least 2 metres between each group is required. The total number of groups that can be present in each space is based on the space (e.g. building size, layout etc.) available to maintain physical distancing, as well as gathering limits.

Recommended Actions

- A designated staff member should monitor adherence to groupings, and physical distancing requirements. This can be made into a friendly game among participants.
- A list of group members must be maintained for 2 weeks and then securely destroyed (i.e. shredded or placed in a secure records destruction bin).
- Use floor markings to identify areas that a group should remain within, if sharing space with another group.
- Consideration should be given to how participants, volunteers, and staff are assigned to a group to ensure that they stay together throughout the day and over the course of a month.
- Consider social distancing requirements if participants will be participating in community-based activities.
- If programming is delivered in a community setting/recreation facility, contact the organization to ensure their guidelines and protocols can be met during outings.

Hand Hygiene

Ensure thorough and frequent hand hygiene for participants, volunteers, and staff. At a minimum, hands should be cleaned when entering and exiting the building, before and after eating, after toileting, before putting on and removing a mask, after handling waste, whenever hands look dirty, and prior to using shared equipment.

Individuals who cannot perform hand hygiene independently will need to be assisted, especially after toileting and before eating.

Clean hands using soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub unless hands are visibly dirty, when cleaning with soap and water is preferred. Alcohol-based hand rubs must contain at least 60% alcohol. Use enough to cover the fronts and backs of both hands and between all your fingers. Rub hands together until they feel dry. See also [Appendix A: Handwashing Poster](#).

Respiratory Hygiene

Encourage everyone to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Throw the used tissue in the garbage and wash hands or use an alcohol-based hand rub immediately after discarding it. If a tissue is not available, cough and sneeze into your elbow, not your hand. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. If you need to touch your face (including to put on, remove, or adjust a mask), wash your hands before and after.

Supplies

The program provider will provide the following for hand and respiratory hygiene:

- A handwashing station
- Liquid soap
- Paper towels
- Hands-free garbage bins
- Medical masks
- Gloves, gowns, and face shield or goggles as needed to assist with personal care
- Minimum 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Cleaning and disinfecting supplies
- Approved disinfectant wipes

Program providers will provide medical masks to participants to ensure they do not need to turn away participants who arrive without an appropriate mask for their program setting or to supply a replacement mask if their mask becomes damaged or dirty.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Program providers should refer to the most recent guidance on environmental management for their program setting. Program providers using rental spaces will ensure the space complies with their infection prevention and control environmental cleaning and disinfecting guidelines. Program providers will have continuous access to cleaning and disinfection supplies to allow for the cleaning of high touch surfaces throughout programming.

Programming space must be cleaned before and after program groups. Items such as countertops, chairs (including arm rests), shared equipment, light switches, washrooms, doorknobs, kitchen equipment, and furniture will need to be cleaned and disinfected.

Equipment and personal assistive devices provided by the facility or brought from home that will be handled or operated by more than one individual need to be cleaned and disinfected between different users.

Resources:

[Cleaning and Disinfection Instructions for Face/Eye Protection](#)

[Cleaning and Disinfection of the Environment and Devices for Primary Care Practices](#)

Recommended Actions

- Keep workstations clean and free of frequently touched items
- Use disposable gloves when cleaning surfaces
- Increase ventilation if possible (e.g. open windows)
- Limit the use of shared equipment
- Consider the use of additional protective measures (e.g. plexiglass dividers to separate administrative areas)
- Keep a daily record of cleaning activities. A checklist will ensure all areas are cleaned and that cleaning is documented.

Participant Equipment and Medication

To find the current guidance on handling a participant's personal equipment, please refer to the [NSHA Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\): Infection Prevention & Control Guidelines for Home & Community Care](#).

Participants may bring essential equipment and medication only. Shared equipment must be cleaned and disinfected with an appropriate disinfectant before and after use. A list of appropriate disinfectants can be found at [Health Canada - Hard Surface Disinfectants and Hand Sanitizers \(COVID-19\)](#).

Participant medications must be labelled and kept separated and placed in a ziploc bag that can be sanitized when received and when sent home with the participant. Medication must be stored in a locked cupboard, where possible.

Note: Consider working with family members to have medications administered at other times of the day, outside program hours, if possible.

SECTION 3: Participant Transportation Guidelines

Providers are permitted to use their own buses or leased buses to take program participants for sightseeing drives. Staff-owned vehicles should not be used for this purpose.

All vehicles (service provider operated, leased or contracted) that provide transportation to participants must be cleaned and disinfected (i.e., high touch surfaces) before and after use.

Service providers offering participants transportation to and from programming or during programming must abide by the following safe transportation practices:

- Drivers of vehicles and all passengers must wear a medical mask.
- Drivers and passengers must sit as far apart as possible, minimizing the number of passengers in the vehicle as much as possible.
- A log of participants transported to and from the day program must be maintained. This must include participants name, one piece of contact information, date and time of transport.

If transportation (e.g. buses etc.) is used during programming (e.g. sightseeing drives), the maximum limit in any transport vehicle is 10, including the driver and any/all staff/volunteers. As with any activity, participants should be grouped together consistently for these outings as much as possible.

SECTION 4: Program Specific Guidelines

Singing Programs

To find the current guidance on singing and music programming, please refer to the [Province of Nova Scotia - COVID-19 Guidance for Musicians \(Vocalists and Instrumentalists\)](#)

Given the potential risk of transmission of COVID-19 due to activities such as singing, program providers are encouraged to conduct singing programs outdoors. If not possible to conduct programming outside, it is asked that program providers have singing programming in well-ventilated areas. Participants are required to wear a medical mask while participating in the program and physical distancing between participants must be maintained.

Exercise Programs

Given the potential risk of transmission of COVID-19 due to activities such as exercise, program providers are encouraged to conduct all exercise programs outdoors. If this is not possible, program providers should conduct exercise programming in well-ventilated areas.

Program providers are asked to implement the following guidelines for exercise programs:

- Program providers are to encourage the use of masks during exercise, as much as possible, and ensure physical distancing between participants.
- Maintain spaced intervals between program groups. This allows the space to be properly cleaned and aired out between groups, if applicable.
- Ensure participants perform hand hygiene prior to, and after, exercise.
- Prevent access to communal water fountains and provide water to participants, as needed, in disposable paper cups. Participants may also bring their own water bottle that can be filled at the water fountain. No one should drink directly from the fountain.
- Encourage participants to come fully prepared for their exercise activity, including wearing their exercise attire and have staff /volunteers discourage the use of communal washrooms for changing.
- If equipment is used, it must be sanitized before and after each use.
- Clean and disinfect all surfaces/spaces before and after each program cohort.

Meal Programs

Program providers must ensure physical distancing during food preparation and during meals times when participant masks are removed. Providers should use single-use cutlery, cups, and plates for all meal programs with participants. If providers have access to a commercial dishwasher, re-usable dishes may be used, and washed immediately after use.

Due to the risk of transmission of COVID-19, communal beverage jugs and self-serve food or beverage stations are prohibited. Food may not be shared. Cooking and baking activities are not permitted at this time.

SECTION 5: Reporting Illness

To find current guidance for reporting a suspected [COVID-19 case](#), please refer to the [COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for Home and Community Care](#).

Staff must report concerns about participant exposure to or symptoms of possible COVID-19 to their immediate supervisor.

Screening

If a participant has signs or symptoms of COVID-19 during screening, they will not be able to participate in the program and arrangements made for them to leave as soon as can be safely done. Staff must:

- Advise the participant and/or family/substitute decision maker to self-isolate and arrange testing
- Advise the participant and/or family/substitute decision maker to call 811 for further screening and testing direction, and to inform Public Health that they have attended the adult day program and
- Advise the Program provider immediately that a participant has symptoms

If a participant is on self-isolation, they will not be able to participate in the program and arrangements made for them to leave as soon as can be safely done.

During Programming

Any staff, volunteer, or participant who develops symptoms of possible COVID-19 should immediately perform hand hygiene, put on their medical mask if not already on, isolate in a separate area with good ventilation, leave as soon as it is safe to do so, and arrange testing (nshealth.ca/coronavirustesting).

- Consider assigning a single staff member to remove participants from the group to minimize potential contacts among staff. Have staff and the symptomatic participant maintain physical distancing, if possible, while waiting for participant transport.

Once they have left the programming space, the space must be cleaned and disinfected. If test results are negative but the individual remains ill, they should remain away from the program until symptoms are resolved.

Return to Programming

A symptomatic individual will be allowed to return to programming when COVID-19 test results confirm the individual is negative and symptoms are improved or resolved, and they do not have a fever.

All staff, volunteers, or participants with symptoms of COVID-19 who refuse to be tested must be treated as a presumptive case of COVID-19. Immediately discontinue program participation for the symptomatic individual. They are able to return to programming 14 days after their symptoms started, as long as their symptoms have resolved, or they receive a negative test. If symptoms continue after 14 days, as determined by the screening process on the day of programming, participants should call 811 or see their health care provider for further advice.

Contact Tracing

Public Health will conduct contact tracing for all persons with COVID-19 and identify close contacts, including program staff and program participants.

Communicating with Staff, Volunteers, Participants and Families

If COVID-19 is confirmed among a staff, volunteer or participant, Public Health will conduct contact tracing and will advise the program providers on next steps for program participants and staff.

If directed by Public Health, communicate with staff, program participants, and families.

- Public health will provide messaging similar to that provided in Appendix C. Use the provided messaging for emails or in-person dialogue.

Messaging and memo templates can be found in [Appendix C](#).

APPENDIX A: Handwashing Poster

PROPER HAND WASHING

Washing your hands frequently with soap and water is the best way to reduce the spread of germs.



1
Wet your hands with warm running water



2
Add soap and scrub for 15-20 seconds



3
Wash backs, thumbs, between fingers, and under nails



4
Rinse off soap under running water



5
Dry your hands with a clean towel



6
Turn off tap with a towel

When soap and water are not available, alcohol-based hand sanitizers can be used if hands are not visibly soiled.


NOVA SCOTIA

APPENDIX B: How to Wear a Non-Medical Fabric Mask Poster

HOW TO WEAR A NON-MEDICAL FABRIC MASK SAFELY

who.int/epi-win

Do's →

- 

Clean your hands before touching the mask
- 

Inspect the mask for damage or if dirty
- 

Adjust the mask to your face without leaving gaps on the sides
- 

Cover your mouth, nose, and chin
- 

Avoid touching the mask
- 

Clean your hands before removing the mask
- 

Remove the mask by the straps behind the ears or head
- 

Pull the mask away from your face
- 

Store the mask in a clean plastic, resealable bag if it is not dirty or wet and you plan to re-use it
- 

Remove the mask by the straps when taking it out of the bag
- 

Wash the mask in soap or detergent, preferably with hot water, at least once a day
- 

Clean your hands after removing the mask

Don'ts →

- 

Do not use a mask that looks damaged
- 

Do not wear a loose mask
- 

Do not wear the mask under the nose
- 

Do not remove the mask where there are people within 1 metre
- 

Do not use a mask that is difficult to breathe through
- 

Do not wear a dirty or wet mask
- 

Do not share your mask with others

A fabric mask can protect others around you. To protect yourself and prevent the spread of COVID-19, remember to keep at least 1 metre distance from others, clean your hands frequently and thoroughly, and avoid touching your face and mask.



APPENDIX C: Communications Messaging and Templates

General Key Messages

We are working with the government to ensure people receive the support they need safely. We are doing everything we can to make sure your support needs will be met.

If there is any disruption in services, we will communicate directly with you. It is important that you have a backup plan if services are disrupted.

We are making some changes to deliver our programs and services safely. These changes may impact the days that you attend programming.

We continue to follow Public Health direction. Tell programming staff if you or someone in your home has COVID-19 or has symptoms of COVID-19. It's also important for program staff to know if someone in your home is self-isolating or is recovering from COVID-19.

Program staff will ask screening questions to every participant on the day of programming before they enter the program space.

If a COVID-19 Case is Connected to Programming

Key Messages

- Our number one priority is the safety of our participants, volunteers, and staff.
- Today, we received notification from Public Health that someone in a day program we operate has tested positive for COVID-19. For reasons of confidentiality, we can not identify the individual. We are following direction and advice from Public Health.
- Anyone who is identified to have had close contact with the individual will be notified by Public Health.

Note: Staff, volunteer, and participant names are not to be provided in communications.

Talking Points For Staff

- Today we learned that someone from one of our programs has tested positive for COVID-19. For reasons of confidentiality, we can not identify the individual.
- We are working closely with Nova Scotia Health Public Health as they investigate. Anyone who is identified to have had close contact with the individual will be notified by Public Health.
- We are here for you. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with your supervisor or with me directly.

Messages to Participants/Family

Dear participants and families:

Today we learned that someone in one of our programs has tested positive for COVID-19. For reasons of confidentiality, we can not identify the individual. We are working closely with Nova Scotia Health's Public Health Department as they conduct their investigation. Anyone who is identified to have had close contact with the individual will be notified by Public Health.

As you know, infection prevention and control measures have been in place at our program since [date] and we are carefully following all Public Health advice.

If you have any questions, please contact [name] [contact information].

Sincerely,

Messages to Volunteers and Staff (All Staff)

Dear Team:

Today, we received notification from Public Health that someone in a day program we operate has tested positive for COVID-19. We are following direction and advice from Public Health. Anyone who is identified to have had close contact with the individual will be notified by Public Health.

As always, we must protect the confidentiality of our co-workers and participants and will not identify the individual. Even if you are asked by someone who seems aware of the situation, we ask that you politely decline the opportunity to discuss the matter.

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with your supervisor or with me directly. We appreciate your hard work and unwavering commitment to the participants and your co-workers.

Sincerely,

Phone Script and Guide For Family/Substitute Decision Maker Calls

Depending on the situation, and based on direction from Public Health, it may be appropriate to call family members/substitute decision makers, especially if email is not reliable or a trusted source of communication.

- Good afternoon/morning. My name is [first name] and I am calling to speak with [name of family member/substitute decision maker].
- Hi [family/substitute decision maker name]. I'm calling from [program] to let you know that today we received notification from Public Health that someone in **a day program we operate** has tested positive for COVID-19. For reasons of confidentiality, we can not identify the individual. We are following direction and advice from Public Health. Anyone who is identified to have had close contact with the individual will be notified by Public Health.
- [Ask if they have any questions. Ensure they have a name and contact information to direct future questions / concerns].
- Thank you for your support during this time. It is appreciated.

Social Media

If you encounter negative posts on your social media sites, including those targeted at your staff, consider the following guidelines, consistent with those followed by Nova Scotia Health and the Government of Nova Scotia:

- Do not respond to posts that include personal attacks, inappropriate language, racism, sexism, etc., and take down any posts that include vulgar language (if posted on your site)
- Answer legitimate questions to the best of your ability, staying within your own areas of responsibility
- Increase internal staff communication, emphasizing how much their employer and their participant's value them, how everyone is pulling together in this difficult time, etc., and offer supports that are available, such as EAP.

APPENDIX D: Resources

Coronavirus (COVID-19) - Government's response to COVID-19

novascotia.ca/coronavirus

- Most recent version of the [Health Protection Act Order and Declaration of State of Emergency](#) at novascotia.ca/coronavirus/alerts-notices
- Information about compassionate exceptions from self-isolation in palliative situations, novascotia.ca/coronavirus/restrictions-and-guidance/#compassionate-exceptions
- COVID self- assessment tool, covid-self-assessment.novascotia.ca/en

Coronavirus (COVID-19): restriction alerts by county

novascotia.ca/coronavirus/county-restrictions

Nova Scotia Public Health offices

nshealth.ca/public-health-offices

NSHA COVID-19

nshealth.ca/coronavirus

- Includes directional signage at nshealth.ca/coronavirus-home/coronavirus-covid-19-resources