

**NEELAM BHATOE**

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***RETURN TO WORK***

***Clinical Practice  
Plan***

## OVERVIEW

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This plan was developed with the goal of reducing the risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19 for both patients and the practitioner within the clinical setting. Here, we identify the actions that the registered massage therapist at Clayton Heights Chiropractic commits to and that all visiting patients must commit to, to resume receiving massage therapy services.

The overall aim of these protocols is to reduce the potential coronavirus transmission. The plan will focus on six areas of concerns listed below.

### **1. Good personal practices**

Understanding how COVID-19 is transmitted and remain committed to behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19 both in practice settings and in one's personal life.

### **2. Therapist Screening**

The therapist will continue to self-monitor for symptoms daily and follow the guidelines set for health practitioners under the guidance of Dr. Henry and the licensing college of CMTBC.

### **3. Patient Screening**

Every patient is screened carefully to reduce the likelihood of someone coming into the clinic with COVID-19. Patients that have new or emerging symptoms of cold or flu will not be treated, and measures are in place to prevent their attendance in the clinic

### **4. Supplies and equipment**

This section will focus on what supplies and equipment have been purchased to provide a safe environment for the patient and the massage therapist. Examples include face masks, aprons, and eye protection is available if the patient asks for it.

### **5. Therapist Infection Control Practices**

This section outlines factors that have been considered in creating the safest treatment environment possible focusing on sanitization, cleaning, and disinfection of commonly touched areas.

### **6. Facility Practices**

This includes strategies the clinic environment has implemented to maximize social distancing, keeping common areas clean and sanitized. It will also identify the actions that the registered massage therapist at Aspect Health & Registered Massage Therapy commits to, and that all visiting patients must commit to, to resume massage therapy services.

# 1. GOOD PERSONAL PRACTISES

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## How COVID 19 spreads

*“Coronavirus is transmitted via liquid droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. The virus can enter through these droplets through the eyes, nose, or throat if you are in close contact.*

*Coronavirus does not transmit through the skin.*

*It can be spread by touch if a person has used their hands to cover their mouth or nose when they cough. That is why we recommend you cough or sneeze into your arm and wash your hands regularly.”*

Source: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/how-it-spreads>

## Everyone Should

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol will be used. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching the eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces frequently.
- Keep 2 meters or 6 feet apart when able to do so.

For measures on prevention see the following link: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks> or for a summary see: <http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/COVID19-Prevention.pdf>

### **Avoiding close contact**

- **\*\*Avoid close contact with people who are sick\*\***
- Be particularly mindful of those who are at the highest risk of getting very sick; those over 65, individuals in a care home or long-term care facility, and those with underlying medical conditions.
- You can spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick. Masks may act as a barrier to help prevent you from spreading tiny droplets to others when you cough or sneeze and when you are unable to practice social distancing.
- Even when wearing a mask, continue to keep 6 feet between yourself and others when possible. For more information on masks please see:  
<http://www.bccdc.ca/healthinfo/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/masks>

### **Cover Cough and Sneezes**

- Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. Throw used tissues in the trash. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available clean your hands with hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Patients will use a tissue if an itch must be addressed.
- Tissues are available for patient's use in reception, treatment room and the building washroom.
- The massage therapist will use a hand towel or tissue to touch or scratch face, or to sneeze into. They will wash their hands directly after before touching the patient again.

### **Clean and Disinfect**

- The therapist will clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, faucets, sinks, chairs, and other equipment in the treatment room.
- Cleaning log will be available for a reference. Refer to Appendix: 2.

## 2. THERAPIST SCREENING

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The massage therapist will use the BC Self-Assessment Tool daily and keep a record of it in a log sheet. Please refer to Appendix: 3

The massage therapist will not work if experiencing any symptoms of:

- Cough
- Fever
- Sore throat
- Chills
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat or pain with swallowing
- Stuffy or runny nose
- Loss of sense of smell or taste

The therapist will limit their number of contacts in a working day by avoid running errands before work or on their lunch break

If a close contact of the therapist has become ill with COVID 19, the therapist will stay home and monitor symptoms and only return to work if they have been self-isolating for 10 days or been cleared by a public health official.

If the massage therapist travels outside of British Columbia, they will quarantine for 14 days and only return to work when they have met this requirement. More information is provided at: <http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/Self-isolation.pdf>

For the time being, the RMT will not work in a dual role. Neelam Bhatoe will not be working in a hospital or clinical setting as a Cardiologist Technologist for the time being.

### 3. PATIENT SCREENING

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#### **Prior to Arrival**

- Patients will be informed about their responsibilities at the time of booking. A notice will be placed on the website, and patients will be responsible for reviewing them prior to each appointment.
- At the time of booking, the patient will be asked to complete the online BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment 24 to 48hrs before the appointment and to stay home if they experience any symptoms of COVID-19. They will be emailed a form to fill electronically.
- The patient will be asked to wear a new or a clean mask upon entry to the clinic
- Unless required for mobility or personal assistance, patients will be asked to come into the facility alone and not bring spouses or children. This is important to promote social distancing in treatment rooms and a larger clinic space.
- If assistance or a companion is required, the massage therapist will determine if the treatment is essential at this time; postpone or refer to alternate care if possible. If treatment goes ahead, RMT will help the patient and companion navigate every step of the way.
- As a part of the consent form, the patient must commit to understanding that while the massage therapist has taken all possible measures to minimize the risk of viral transmission, the nature of massage therapy means that physical distancing is not possible in the treatment room and a risk of viral transmission does exist.
- Patients with higher risk profiles and or weakened immune systems will be considered alternatives for treatment care such as starting the treatment in the first slot of the day to reduce the number of close contacts the therapist has had through the day.

#### **Arrival at the clinic**

- The patient will be asked to wait outside in their vehicle or outside the clinic until a few minutes before their appointment time.
- Once they arrive at the clinic, they will sanitize their hands at the sanitization station and walk straight into the treatment room confirmed by the therapist the day before.
- If the patient is not wearing a mask, the therapist will provide them with a new disposable one. If patient refuses to wear a mask, the therapist will drape the head piece differently to reduce transmission of droplets. A pillowcase will be used to act as a possible barrier.

- They will be required to sign the consent waiver form if it is their first appointment back since COVID 19. Refer to Appendix: 1.
- They will verify again that they have used the BC Self-Assessment Tool.
- They will confirm that they have not travelled outside British Columbia within 14 days prior to their appointment.
- If patient does not meet pre-screening criteria upon physical presentation at the clinic, the treatment will be cancelled immediately.
- The therapist and patient must agree that the therapeutic benefit of massage therapy outweighs any potential consequence of treatment, including the possibility of viral transmission

Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses and seasonal allergies.

- Cough
  - Fever
  - Sore throat
  - Chills
  - Shortness of breath
  - Sore throat or pain with swallowing
  - Stuffy or runny nose
  - Loss of sense of smell or taste
- If patients are experiencing the above symptoms and have not been tested for COVID-19, the massage therapist will recommend that they do so and that they start by calling 8-1-1.
  - People with COVID-19 may also experience gastrointestinal symptoms like diarrhea, nausea and vomiting a few days after the onset of the above symptoms.
  - COVID-19 Symptoms may range from mild to severe.
  - **Patients are required to cancel appointments if they feel UNWELL** at the day of the appointment, even without notice and will not be charged a cancellation fee.

## 4. SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

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The following have been taken into consideration to minimize the risk of transmission:

<p>Furnishing Considerations</p>	<p>Laundry hampers have been changed. The front desk has had plexiglass installed in the waiting room. The staff will sanitize and disinfect patient chairs No touch garbage bin has been placed in room number 3. All chairs in the massage rooms can be wiped and disinfected after each patient</p>
<p>Personal items for the therapist</p>	<p>The massage therapist will wear an apron that will be changed after every patient. The therapist will wear a mask that will be changed after each treatment. The therapist will wear eye protection if requested by the patient.</p>
<p>Cleaning Supplies</p>	<p>Approved hard-surface disinfectants that have a drug identification number and is listed on the government of Canada's website will be used. Found at <a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-healthproducts/disinfectants/COVID-19/list.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-healthproducts/disinfectants/COVID-19/list.html</a>. Extra towels have been purchased. Each towel will be washed after every use. including washing hands every time, disinfecting, or draping the patient. Gloves will be used for handling cleaners and for doing laundry Push pump bottle with rubbing alcohol higher than 70% will be used to disinfect the massage therapists' laptops and cellular device</p>
<p>Hygiene supplies</p>	<p>Hand sanitizer will be provided at the sanitization station. Disposable patient face masks will also be provided if the patient needs them by the massage therapist.</p>

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	<p>A single storage container with a lid will be provided to each patient to put belongings and clothes into. The container will only be used once during that day and will be disinfected right after.</p> <p>Another storage container will be provided to the next patient.</p>
<p><b>Laundry and Laundry Area</b></p>	<p>The therapists will take used linens, face cloths and towels, apron directly into the laundry room</p> <p>Each therapist will help keep the laundry clean and organized.</p>

## 5. THERAPIST INFECTION CONTROL PRACTICES

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### **Treatment room:**

- All clutter, decorations, and items that cannot be washed, wiped, and sanitized have been removed from the treatment space.
- All pillows, linens and items that are not being used for the treatment in question are not in the treatment room. They are enclosed in a cabinet or in cleanable storage bins.
- Pillows that can be disinfected will only be used.
- The massage therapist opens and closes door before, during, and after treatment as required. The RMT will be using a hand towel or tissue to open the door to the treatment room and allows patient to enter.
- RMT opens sanitized barrier if needed.
- Hand washing, drying and sanitization options are available for the RMT and patient. The massage treatment rooms all have soap and towels to use.
- Every surface that the therapist or the patient touches will be cleaned and disinfected between every treatment. This includes oil bottles, treatment tools, linens, the treatment table (surface and table legs near the face rest), desks, chairs, exercise equipment, doorknobs, light switches.
- Only a disinfectant approved by Health Canada will be used to clean and sanitize the above equipment.
- The table warmer will be removed from the massage table. All porous materials that cannot be cleaned between each use will be removed from the treatment room
- The therapist will wash their hands every time before touching a patient, after a massage, after a cough, sneeze or if they touch their face.
- They will also wash hands after using chemicals and after touching any other items and surfaces within the clinic. As is common practice all linens, blankets, and hand towels used in treatments are laundered after every use.
- A storage container is available for each patient to use to store their belongings.
- The therapist has created a cleaning procedure and will keep a daily log sheet for reference. Please refer to Appendix: 3.

### **Personal Protective Equipment:**

- The therapist will wear a mask and change it after each treatment
- The therapist will wear an apron of clothing and change it after each treatment
- If asked by the patient, the therapist will wear protective eye equipment.
- The therapist is responsible for donning PPE in a safe and professional manner

### **Treatment modifications Professional Obligation**

- The massage therapists will start at staggered start times to reduce the number of patients in the clinic at a given time and to provide more clinic space to keep social distancing measures at 2 meters apart for the staff
- All Registered Massage Therapists have allowed for 15 minutes of cleaning before and after each appointment.
- Cleaning and Disinfecting are being followed under Worksafe Protocols

### **Professional Obligation**

- The therapist is following all the health and safety guidelines outlined by the College of Massage Therapists of British Columbia and the Provincial Health Officer and that they are taking all reasonable precautions to clean and disinfect the clinic and all the surfaces within the treatment room.
- No guarantees have been made by the therapist that the patient may not come in contact with COVID-19 at or during an appointment.

## 6. FACILITY PRACTICES

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- To promote social distancing in waiting rooms, patient will be asked to remain in their car until a few minutes prior to the start of their appointment. New patients will be encouraged to complete intake forms online or print and complete forms before coming into the clinic.
- Staggered start times between all the practitioners will reduce traffic flow into the clinic.
- The number of chairs in the waiting room have been reduced, placed 6 feet apart and are being cleaned after each use.
- The waiting room floor has been marked to keep social distancing measures in place of 2m apart. Patients will be directed to follow these guidelines.
- Water will not be provided at this time in the waiting room as usual. If the patient needs water, please notify the massage therapist so they can get it for you.
- The clinic door is open for patients at the time of operating hours.
- Signage is posted on the entrance door of the clinic asking patients to not enter the clinic if they have any of the signs, symptoms or travel risks associated with COVID-19.
- A hand sanitization station is available upon clinic entry.
- The RMT will always remain 2 meters apart from the patient except for when in the treatment room

### **Administration**

- Plexiglass has been set up at the front desk to separate the administrative staff from patients and have masks available if needed.
- The administrative staff have been instructed by the clinic owner on current cleaning and sanitizing procedures to follow
- Patients have been asked to use a debit or sales card with a tap option instead of cash. The point of sales machines is wiped down after every use.
- Administration will ask the patient COVID-19 screening questions while scheduling patients.

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### Physical Distancing

- The RMT will always remain 2 meters apart from the patient except for when in the treatment room
- Patient is required to wait outside until a few minutes before their treatment time.

### In the Event That a Patient Tests Positive for COVID-19 Having Been to a Massage Therapy Appointment within the 14-days Prior to Onset of Symptoms

The patient will contact the therapist and inform him of positive test results and possible transmission of the virus immediately.

### In the Event That a Patient Alleges they Caught COVID-19 from the Therapist

- The therapist will immediately call public health at 8-1-1 to report the alleged transmission, providing both the name of the RMT and the name and contact details of the patient with consent from the patient to release that information.
- All massage therapy appointments will be **cancelled**, and the Massage Therapist will cease to provide services until Public Health has investigated and provided direction.
- The therapist will immediately self-isolate until cleared by the Public Health and has received direction.

### In the Event That the Therapist Comes into Close Contact with Someone Showing Signs of Illness or Tests Positive for COVID-19

The therapist will immediately self-isolate.

All massage therapy appointments will be **cancelled**, and the therapist will cease to provide services

#### UNTIL:

- The close contact has been tested for COVID-19 and the results proved negative and the therapist is well,
- OR after self-isolating for 14 days and having no symptoms of fever develop.
- OR being cleared by a public health official.

### **Asymptomatic Spreaders**

- Asymptomatic transmission of the coronavirus is an unavoidable risk of practice until we've acquired herd immunity, there is an effective treatment or vaccine against COVID-19.
- We have put into place protocols to help mitigate that risk as outlined in the preceding documentation.
- No guarantees have been made by the therapist, that the patient may not come in contact with COVID-19 at or during an appointment
- The close contact has been tested for COVID-19 and the results proved negative and the therapist is well,

### **Informed Consent**

In the current environment of COVID-19 risk, informed consent requires that the patient be informed and understands that:

- Any massage therapy treatment involves some risk of COVID-19 transmission.
- The therapist is following protocol to help reduce or mitigate risk where possible, but that risk cannot be reduced to zero.
- The patient consents to the treatment despite some risks

# APPENDIX I. AMMENDED TO NEW CLINIC FORM

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## COVID-19 Patient Intake Waiver Form

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ Do you have a fever, a new cough, a worsening chronic cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ Have you had close contact with anyone with acute respiratory illness or have you travelled outside of British Columbia in the past 14 days?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ Do you have a confirmed case of COVID-19 or had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ Do you have 2 or more of the following symptoms: Sore throat, runny nose/sneezing, nasal congestion, hoarse voice, difficulty swallowing, decrease or loss of sense of smell, chills, headaches, unexplained fatigue/malaise, diarrhea, abdominal pain, or nausea/vomiting?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ If the person is over 65 years of age are, they experiencing any of the following: delirium, falls, acute functional decline, or worsening of chronic conditions?

I understand that while the therapist is following all of the health and safety guidelines outlined by the Registered Massage Therapists Association of British Columbia, the College of Massage Therapists of British Columbia, and the Provincial Health Officer and that they are taking all reasonable precautions to clean and disinfect the clinic and all the surfaces within the treatment room, there are no guarantees that I may not come into contact with COVID-19.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 2

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### CLEANING LOG SHEET:

Date and Time	Treatment Surfaces (Table, Table legs, Chair and Counter)	Massage Tools and Equipment	Door Handles, Light Switches	Cellular Device and Therapist's Computer	Sink, Faucet, & Tissue Box	Cabinets & Storage Container (Patients)	Garbage Can

## APPENDIX 3

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### DAILY SELF-MONITORING SHEET NEELAM BHATOE RMT

Date:					
Time:					
Body Temperature:					
No Symptoms:					
Self-Assessment Tool Check:					
Other Symptoms:					
Signature:					

