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To:

From: COVID-19 Isolation & COVID+ Site Project Partners: Inner City Health Associates, University Health Network, Parkdale Queen West CHC, The Neighbourhood Group, City of Toronto and Toronto Public Health.

Date: January 5, 2021

Re: Update regarding the COVID Isolation and Recovery Site for Homeless and Shelter clients

The City of Toronto Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA), Toronto Public Health (TPH) and its partners remain committed to promoting and enhancing best practices in Infection Prevention and Control as the Omicron variant increases demands across all sectors including healthcare, the shelter system and homelessness services.

In the context of widespread Omicron transmission in the general community, the City of Toronto SSHA has implemented a range of critical measures to support clients and staff in the homelessness sector. Toronto Public Health has provided detailed guidance throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to the homelessness sector on the creation of effective isolation plans within congregate shelter settings to ensure shelter residents needing support have a place to safely isolate. In addition, a COVID Isolation and Recovery site has operated with health and social care services for those requiring additional supports during their isolation period.

Following guidance from the Chief Medical Officer of Health on December 30 persons living in underhoused and homeless settings are to continue to be prioritized for COVID-19 testing both when symptomatic and in the context of outbreaks. The following are updated changes to the criteria for transfer to the COVID Isolation and Recovery Site that has intensive clinical, harm reduction and peer supports:

- ***Individuals who test positive from a congregate shelter (non-hotel)*** may be referred to the Isolation and Recovery Site and will continue to be prioritized for admission for isolation. Consideration will be given to the support needs of individual clients and the remaining duration of isolation at the time of referral. In the context of confirmed outbreaks, cohorted groups may be directed to isolate in-situ or be referred to the Isolation and Recovery Site after assessment with supporting public health, shelter, clinical and harm reduction teams.
- ***Individuals who are symptomatic close contacts from a congregate shelter (non-hotel)*** may be referred to the Isolation and Recovery Site and will continue to be considered for admission after assessment by SSHA, harm reduction and clinical teams for potential admission. In the context of confirmed outbreaks, cohorted groups may be directed to isolate in-situ or be referred to the Isolation and Recovery Site after assessment with supporting public health, shelter, clinical and harm reduction teams.
- ***Individuals who test positive or are close contacts for COVID-19 from physical distancing hotel programs (i.e. hotel shelters) or other programs with single occupancy rooms*** will remain at their existing program for in-situ isolation following guidance provided by Toronto Public Health. Individuals with complex clinical, physical or harm reduction needs may be referred for admission to the Isolation and Recovery Site after assessment with supporting public health, shelter, clinical and harm reduction teams.
- ***Individuals who test positive or are symptomatic contacts of COVID-19 who are living or sleeping outdoors (i.e. do not have an existing admission to a shelter program)*** will be prioritized for admission to the Isolation and Recovery Site.
- ***All individuals who are identified by TPH as being asymptomatic close contacts of a confirmed case of COVID-19*** should isolate in-situ at their existing shelter site.

For those individuals who will be isolating in-situ, the City of Toronto Shelter, Support and Housing Administration will continue to work with shelter operators to ensure that all are able to offer isolation following the guidance by Toronto Public Health. Both Inner City Health Associates and the mobile COVID Team (MOVID) operated by Parkdale Queen West CHC and The Neighbourhood Group are working with the City of Toronto SSHA to provide clinical, harm reduction and social care supports during in-situ isolation. **Health Care and Shelter Providers can continue to refer clients who meet eligibility requirements by using the electronic referral or by fax to 416-696-3463 and can contact 437-343-1965 to assist with eligibility determination.**

Table 1: Isolation Response Plans by Setting and COVID-19 Status

Congregate setting	Test positive	Prioritized for referral to the Isolation and Recovery Site. In context of outbreak, will require in-situ plans in most cases; individuals may be referred after assessment based on complex support needs as part of in-situ planning.
	Symptomatic close contact	May be referred after assessment, limited space reserved for individuals with complex support needs.
	Asymptomatic close contact	Isolate in-situ
Hotel/Single Room Occupancy Setting	Test positive	Isolate in-situ in most cases.
	Symptomatic close contact	Isolate in-situ; individuals may be referred after assessment based on complex support needs.
	Asymptomatic close contact	Isolate in-situ
Living or Sleeping Outdoors (encampment)	Test positive	Prioritized for referral to the Isolation and Recovery Site
	Symptomatic Close Contact	Prioritized for referral to the Isolation and Recovery site
	Asymptomatic Close Contact	Referral to a shelter through Central Intake