



Message from the Registrar regarding Personal Protective Equipment

We have heard concerns from several members and Doctors Manitoba about the availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and the ability to provide care safely in the absence of access to the appropriate PPE. We understand that there are coordinated efforts within the health system to find and distribute PPE to where it is needed most. The supply and distribution of PPE is outside CPSM's jurisdiction, but we have voiced these concerns to Shared Health.

Our members are vital to the health care team and are critical to the success of managing the current COVID-19 public health emergency. **While members have a duty to continue to care for their patients and provide care to other patients during this pandemic, it is critical that members remain healthy so that you continue to provide medical care for the duration of this unprecedented event.**

We recognize the immense challenges that providing care in this pandemic is creating and we want to provide you with some clarity for your practice. The CPSM has adopted a similar position to the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Ontario as outlined in the following paragraphs.

The [Shared Health requirements for appropriate PPE](#) were recently changed in response to community spread. It is important to be aware of and follow the latest guidance from Shared Health, Public Health and your local Regional Health Authority and apply it to your practice situation and individual patient encounters.

For community-based physicians, it's important that you only conduct assessments of patients if you are able to take the precautions that are appropriate for that particular patient encounter. If you are unable to protect yourself in accordance with the latest Shared Health requirements, shift as much of your work to virtual as possible, re-direct patients appropriately and assist your patients in obtaining access to care that you cannot provide.

We know that many members working on the front-line, especially those of you in hospitals, may be faced with difficult decisions if access to PPE is a challenge, while the need to care for suspected COVID-19 or COVID-19 positive patients continues to increase.

If you are no longer legitimately able to practice safely according to the Shared Health requirements, it will be important to protect your health as much as possible to ensure the sustainability of our member workforce to provide medical care during this COVID-19

pandemic. You will need to exercise your judgment as to whether to provide care in a particular situation, considering:

- the need to support not just the patient in front of you, but future patients as well;
- the potential for harm, both to yourself and the patient given the specific circumstances of the situation; and
- whether the patient is known to have COVID-19 or not and the likelihood of you being exposed.

We recognize the extraordinary contributions of all of you, including physician assistants, clinical assistants, residents, medical students and physicians during the COVID-19 pandemic. We acknowledge and thank you for your personal and professional sacrifices in providing care to vulnerable and scared Manitobans. Your courage, compassion and commitment is nothing short of heroic.

Take care and be safe.
Anna Ziomek

Other useful links regarding PPE

- 1) PPE provincial guidelines

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/covid-19-provincial-ppe-guidelines.pdf>

- 2) PPE in Acute and sub acute centres

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/ppe-provincial-requirements-acute-sub-acute.pdf>

- 3) PPE in long term care centres updated April 4th

<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/ppe-provincial-requirements-ltc.pdf>