



# OFFICE-BASED PRIMARY CARE: SAFETY FOR YOUR PATIENTS, YOUR STAFF, AND YOURSELF

Webinar date: **May 14, 2020**

Recording: <https://ubccpd.ca/office-based-primary-care-safety-your-patients-your-staff-and-yourself>

Slides: <https://ubccpd.ca/sites/ubccpd.ca/files/COVID-19-Webinar-Slides-May-14.pdf>

**Disclaimer:** Information on COVID-19 is changing rapidly and much of the research is preliminary. Assessment and management protocols are suggestions only; they do not take the place of clinical judgement. Please check with your own health authorities and local medical health officers as policies and support for the suggested approaches to patient care may vary between regions.

## Webinar Summary of Clinical Pearls

### Safety Measures

It is important to consider the effectiveness of safety measures and their position on the hierarchy when choosing appropriate control measures to reduce risk of exposure to COVID-19.

#### 1. Elimination or substitution

- Removing the risk of exposure entirely from the worker
- Eliminating work tasks, postponing, re-organizing, or planning work in such a way that workers are not at risk of exposure to COVID-19
- Workers working remotely would be an example of eliminating the risk from the workplace

#### 2. Engineering controls

- Engineering control is the next best choice
- Designed to remove the hazard at the source, before the worker encounters it
- Physical changes in the workplace, such as installing a barrier between workers or between workers and others, or ventilation systems

### 3. Administrative controls

- Less effective control involves altering work practices to minimize exposure, such as changing work procedures, training, and signage
- Examples include minimizing the numbers of patients in an office, staggering work shifts, putting posters up around the worksite reminding workers of personal hygiene best practices, and enhancing cleaning protocols

### 4. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Least effective control and the last form of protection
- Be used after careful consideration of the previous control measures
- Includes gloves, procedural

## In-Person Visits: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is Required

- **If PPE is not available, find appropriate alternative care for the patient**

No reasonable physician is going to put their health at risk by not wearing PPE. Patients should also not be put at risk by providers who do not wear PPE. However, physicians also have a duty of care to their patients. If PPE is not available, the patient should be appropriately redirected to an assessment centre or colleague. The CPSBC and CMPA do not have expectation that physicians put themselves at risk if PPE is unavailable.

- **No physician will be forced to see patients in-person.**

Some physicians are concerned about their own health and do not want to see patients in person during the pandemic. One option is to discuss with their department other ways to contribute. If a physician cannot provide care for their own patients then other arrangements should be made. You cannot abandon your patients by closing your clinic without an appropriate back up plan for your patients to receive care.

## Thanks to the speakers on the video:

- **Dr. Olivia Sampson**, MD, CCFP, MPH, RCPSC. Manager, Clinical Services, WorkSafeBC
- **Ms. Jacqueline Holmes**, RN, MAL-H. Manager, Prevention Field Services, WorkSafeBC
- **Dr. Brenda Hardie**, MD, CCFP, FCFP. Family Physician & Member, Physician Education Committee, WorkSafeBC
- **Ms. Andrea Friesen**, Research & Evaluation Analyst, WorkSafeBC (Questions)
- **Dr. Bruce Hobson**, Moderator