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## Guidelines on Supporting Students Who Require Interventions or Supports that Cannot be Delivered from a Distance

### Purpose

This document was prepared to assist school divisions and funded independent schools in keeping students and staff safe in situations when students require interventions or supports that cannot be provided from a distance of two meters.

Inclusion Support Branch appreciates the support of a team coordinated by the Infection Prevention and Control Consultant, Manitoba Health Seniors and Active Living, in the development of the content for this document.

### Assumptions

All facilities providing schooling or school-related activities must continue to follow applicable health and safety legislation to ensure the safety, health and well-being of students and staff.

The underlying assumptions of this document are that students have already screened negative by parents or following the protocol established by the school or school division.

Schools and school divisions are following the most recent relevant guidelines related to physical distancing and other measures such as:

- “Limited Use of School Facilities Guidelines” found at [www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/support/limited\\_use\\_school.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/covid/support/limited_use_school.html)  
[www.edu.gov.mb.ca/m12/covid/appui/installations.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/m12/covid/appui/installations.html)
- Manitoba School Boards Association School Re-Entry Protocols: A Reference Guide for Schools found at [www.mbschoolboards.ca/documents/services/School%20Re-entry%20Protocols%20June%202020.pdf](http://www.mbschoolboards.ca/documents/services/School%20Re-entry%20Protocols%20June%202020.pdf)

Before implementation, it is recommended that this content be reviewed by the Workplace Safety and Health Committee of the school division or school.



## Special Considerations

When working with students who need extra supports, additional considerations are beneficial to both students and staff members.

- In order to avoid stigma or unintended consequences, it is important that routine practices are followed universally.
- Consider how the environment can be engineered to support students who have difficulty following recommended protocols (e.g., students who: are impulsive, working to improve self-management, self-management is not yet possible)
  - Suggestions include: use tape on the floor, hoops, mats or other items that can mark off personal space; organize activities with a visual cue about how many students should be in that area (e.g., two chairs next to an activity).
- Review student specific plans to determine if interventions that require close physical proximity for longer periods of time are necessary (e.g., physically directing a student).
- Student specific plans may be required to address particular situations (e.g., student with 'tics' that include touching their face; student with mental health needs and whom is upset or does not understand the need to physically distance; ASL sign may require touching of face).
- School clinicians will review additional protocols identified by their regulatory body.



## Following Routine Practices

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unclean hands.
- Adhere to the following hand hygiene guidelines for both students and staff. Engage in frequent hand hygiene with soap and water for at least 15-20 seconds or the use of alcohol based sanitizer at the following times:
  - at the start of the day and before going home
  - before and after completing any support/procedure that does not allow physical distancing (both student(s) and staff)
  - before and after donning and doffing personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, mask, eye shield as outlined later in this document
  - after going to the washroom, wiping nose or handling dirty tissues, coughing, sneezing or blowing nose
  - after getting hands dirty or if they have become contaminated
  - after cleaning tasks (staff)
  - before and after food preparation or contact with food
  - before and after snacks or meals

Note: The hand hygiene procedure takes longer than 15-20 seconds as you need to turn the water on, get the hands wet and perform the lathering and mechanical actions and then rinse off and dry. 15-20 seconds is the time you are lathering and performing the mechanical actions.



## Provide Accessible Information and Direct Instruction

- Encourage hand hygiene and make alcohol-based hand sanitizer available at all building access points.
- Post signs in common areas such as: entrances, classrooms, restrooms, life skills area, physiotherapy area, vocational area
- Provide clear, direct instruction about how to perform hand hygiene and cough etiquette.
  - Common language in the community
  - Short messages that explain simple steps they can take
  - Large font and graphics
  - Accessible instructions (e.g., braille, pictorial)
  - Use of Social Stories
- See links for posters that define/explain hand hygiene and cough etiquette:
  - [www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/docs/ipc/cough.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/docs/ipc/cough.pdf)
  - [www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/docs/ipc/cough.fr.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/docs/ipc/cough.fr.pdf)
  - [www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/docs/ipc/hand.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/docs/ipc/hand.pdf)
  - [www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/docs/ipc/hand.fr.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/docs/ipc/hand.fr.pdf)
  - [www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/docs/ipc/cover.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/docs/ipc/cover.pdf)
  - [www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/docs/ipc/aaachoo.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/docs/ipc/aaachoo.pdf)
  - [www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/docs/ipc/handwashing\\_procedure.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/cdc/docs/ipc/handwashing_procedure.pdf)
  - [www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare/resources/pubs/posters.fr.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare/resources/pubs/posters.fr.pdf)



## Non-medical Masks

Wearing a non-medical mask has not been proven to protect the person wearing it. However, good hand hygiene and cough etiquette will provide significant protection from viral respiratory illnesses.

The evolving evidence on transmission of COVID-19 suggests that infected people may spread the virus without experiencing symptoms, or before symptoms begin. Choosing to wear a non-medical mask is one way to protect those around you. If you choose to wear a non-medical mask, be sure to carefully perform hand hygiene before a non-medical mask is put on, and after it is taken off. Also, avoid touching your face as much as possible. This will further reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

[www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/prepareandprevent/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/prepareandprevent/index.html)  
[www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/prepareandprevent/index.fr.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/prepareandprevent/index.fr.html)



## Considerations Regarding Staff Assignments

It is important to identify which staff members can safely work with students considered low, medium, high risk, based on the individual circumstances of staff members. Staff would then be assigned accordingly and/or necessary accommodations would need to be put into place.

Vulnerable populations are described by Public Health as outlined below. These vulnerabilities need to be considered as they relate to both students and staff.

- Anyone who is:
  - At risk due to underlying medical conditions (e.g., heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, cancer)
  - At risk due to a compromised immune system from a medical condition or treatment (e.g., chemotherapy)
  - An older adult
- Anyone who has:
  - Difficulty reading, speaking, understanding or communicating
  - Difficulty doing preventive activities, like frequent hand washing and covering coughs and sneezes
  - Ongoing specialized medical care or needs specific medical supplies
  - Ongoing supervision needs or support for maintaining independence
  - Difficulty accessing medical care or health advice
  - Difficulty accessing transportation
  - Economic barriers
  - Unstable employment or inflexible working conditions
  - Social or geographic isolation, like in remote and isolated communities
  - Insecure, inadequate, or nonexistent housing conditions



## Students Who Require Supports that Cannot be Delivered at a Distance

It is understood that there are students who require specific interventions or supports that cannot be delivered from a distance.

- Examples of interventions/supports include:
  - Catheterization
  - Gastrostomy and Ostomy feeding/care
  - Blood-glucose monitoring
  - Pre-set oxygen

- Suctioning
- Diapering
- Assistance in using the washroom
- Assistance with feeding
- Assistance with mobility
- Assistance with communication device or other teaching tools
- Students who may need emergency medication administered by school staff (e.g., epinephrine auto-injector (epi-pen), asthma medication, rescue medication for seizures)



## Level of Risk

Precautions related to these types of supports will vary depending on the level of risk.

### Low Risk

- A student would be considered **low risk** if they meet this criteria:
  - has screened negative
  - can communicate sufficiently to follow basic directions
  - able to perform preventative activities like frequent hand hygiene and cough etiquette
  - generally cooperative during all types of procedures

When the risk is low, following **routine practices** and **providing accessible information and direct instruction** are considered sufficient. See information outlined previously in this document.

Disposable gloves would only be worn if required to perform close personal care that results in potential for contact with bodily fluids. Perform hand hygiene before AND after removing gloves.

### Medium Risk

- A student would be considered **medium risk** if they met this criteria:
  - screened negative
  - has difficulty communicating sufficiently to follow basic directions
  - has difficulty performing preventative activities like frequent hand hygiene and cough etiquette
  - generally cooperative during all types of procedures
  - normally demonstrates symptoms such as running nose, coughing, sneezing, gagging, drooling due to individual needs

Medium risk situations call for **routine practices**, as outlined previously in this document, **to be followed at all times. Providing accessible information and direct instruction** is also useful. In addition, the following precautions are recommended:

- Disposable gloves would only be worn if required to perform close personal care that results in potential for contact with bodily fluids. Perform hand hygiene before AND after removing gloves.
  - Please see Manitoba School Boards Association School Re-Entry Protocols: A Reference Guide for Schools for disposal protocols.
- A procedural/surgical mask worn by staff member when they are unable to practice physical distancing of 2 metres.
  - See the following link for Guidance on the Removal, Storage and Extended Wear of Medical Face Masks <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/extended-use-of-face-masks.pdf>
  - Please see Manitoba School Boards Association School Re-Entry Protocols: A Reference Guide for Schools for disposal protocols.
- Suggestions for teaching experiences that help students learn about hand hygiene and avoidance of touching eyes, nose and mouth with unclean hands.
  - Break down into smaller steps to increase understanding
  - Use of timers to help ensure adequate time. See how many 15-20 second songs student can identify. Be creative—engage the students in coming up with games and other ways to encourage everyone to wash their hands for 15-20 seconds. Older students may watch videos of procedures or science experiments to teach techniques.
  - Note: The procedure takes longer than 15-20 seconds as you need to turn the water on, get the hand wet and perform the lathering and mechanical actions and then rinse off and dry. 15-20 seconds is the time you are lathering and performing the mechanical actions.

## High Risk

- A student would be considered **high risk** if they meet this criteria:
  - screened negative
  - has difficulty communicating sufficiently to follow basic directions
  - has difficulty performing preventative activities like frequent hand hygiene and cough etiquette
  - uncooperative during most/all types of procedures
  - vulnerabilities include **expected** behaviours that increase chance of spreading infection (e.g., spitting, biting)

High risk situations call for **routine practices**, as outlined previously in this document, **to be followed at all times. Providing accessible information and direct instruction** is also useful. In addition, the following precautions are recommended:

- Disposable gloves would only be worn if required to perform close personal care that results in potential for contact with bodily fluids. Perform hand hygiene before AND after removing gloves.
  - Please see Manitoba School Boards Association School Re-Entry Protocols: A Reference Guide for Schools for disposal protocols.
- A procedural/surgical mask worn by staff member when they are unable to practice physical distancing of 2 metres.
  - See the following link for Guidance on the Removal, Storage and Extended Wear of Medical Face Masks  
<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/extended-use-of-face-masks.pdf>
  - Please see Manitoba School Boards Association School Re-Entry Protocols: A Reference Guide for Schools for disposal protocols.
- Eye shield worn by staff member
  - Retain eye protection for full shift.
  - When removed, clean, disinfect and store per protocol.
  - See the following link for Guidance on Disinfecting Re-usable Eye Protection  
<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/standard-operating-procedure-disinfecting-eye.pdf>
  - Please see Manitoba School Boards Association School Re-Entry Protocols: A Reference Guide for Schools for disposal protocols.
- Gown: **only if** a student develops cold/flu symptoms or becomes COVID-19 suspect during the school day and requires support that cannot be delivered from a distance.
  - If a student develops symptoms while at the school, they should be isolated in a predetermined isolation space. Where a separate room is not available, they should be kept at least two metres away from others.
  - The child's parent/caregiver should be notified to come and pick them up immediately and instructed to call Health Links at 204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257.
  - Gown should be laundered (if reusable) or discarded (if disposable) when damp, soiled, damaged or when student-care tasks are complete.
  - See the following link for Guidance on Donning and Doffing PPE:  
<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/PPE-on.pdf>  
<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/PPE-on-fr.pdf>  
<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/PPE-off.pdf>  
<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/files/PPE-off-fr.pdf>



## Additional Notes

- Please see the Manitoba School Boards Association School Re-Entry Protocols: A Reference Guide for Schools for information about cleaning, sanitizing, laundry and safe disposal protocols.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will need to be purchased by the school or school division.
- Posters for Risk Assessment Screening and Social (Physical) Distancing can be found in multiple languages at:  
[www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/resources/index.html#posters](http://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/resources/index.html#posters)  
[www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/resources/index.fr.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/resources/index.fr.html)
- Manitoba Education is committed to providing updated information as it becomes available. For the most up to date general information and public health direction, please refer to:  
[www.manitoba.ca/covid19/index.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/index.html)  
[www.manitoba.ca/covid19/index.fr.html](http://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/index.fr.html)
- Information will be adapted as Manitoba Health's guidance to Manitobans evolves.