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## South Island COVID-19 Screening Clinic- March 11, 2020

### Information for Family Physicians and Nurse Practitioners

Recognizing the increased demand for COVID-19 assessment, and the potential impact on community physicians and emergency departments, a dedicated COVID-19 testing site will be opened at the Victoria Health Unit this week.

The purpose of this site is to increase capacity for testing for patients who are unable to access testing through a primary care provider, and minimize disruption for primary care practices. **We are still recommending that community physicians and NPs who have the capacity to test their own patients continue to do so to ensure continuity of care.** This site is NOT appropriate for patients who are seriously ill and require hospitalization.

We do not currently have evidence that COVID-19 is circulating in the general population in any BC community. Therefore, at this time the COVID-19 Screening clinic will focus on testing people who have had *higher risk exposures AND are symptomatic with compatible symptoms.*

#### **Inclusion Criteria for COVID-19 Screening Clinic (as of March 10, 2020; subject to change)**

South Island physicians and other primary care providers can refer patients to the COVID-19 Screening clinic who meet the following criteria:

- Have symptoms compatible with COVID-19, eg. fever, cough, difficulty breathing AND
- Travel history to a COVID-19 affected area outside of Canada in the last 14 days prior to symptom onset OR
- Close exposure to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days prior to symptom onset OR
- Other exposure of concern (e.g. household exposure to an ill returned traveler from an affected area)

Patients who do NOT meet the screening criteria will not be eligible for testing, and should not be referred to this clinic at this time. Such patients can be referred to 8-1-1 to get information about respiratory illness self-care and self-isolation. Patients cannot self-refer to this clinic, nor is it a drop-in clinic.

#### **Referral Process**

If you have a patient who **meets the screening criteria**, does not appear seriously ill, and you cannot do COVID-19 testing in your own practice, please do the following:

- **Have the patient call the COVID-19 Screening clinic intake line at 250-388-2200, press 1 to speak to the COVID-19 screening clinic** to be triaged between the hours of 8:30-

4:30 PM M-F. If the patient presents to you on a weekend/holiday or evening, instruct the patient to call the intake line during next available business hours. Hours of intake access may expand in future.

- This phone number should NOT be posted publicly as patients should not self-refer, but can be given to patients who you believe need COVID-19 testing.
- Patients who self-present to the clinic without a referral will not be seen. Do not send patients directly to the clinic.
- If the patient meets the screening criteria, the intake nurse will schedule a screening appointment at the COVID-19 Screening clinic and provide instructions on where the patient should go. Patients who do not meet the screening criteria will be provided information about general respiratory illness self-care and self-isolation.
- Instruct the patient to self-isolate at home until their screening appointment. They should be reminded to don a mask as soon as entering the hospital or any other healthcare facility.
- Patients who are assessed at the COVID-19 screening clinic will be discharged to self-isolate at home, and follow-up information provided. Patients will be directed to call the BCCDC coronavirus results hotline for lab results. The number is 1-833-707-2792 (Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm). If there is a positive result, the patient will receive direct follow up from Public Health Communicable Disease.
- If the patient appears to have symptoms that require a higher level of care or more urgent assessment, please refer them to their local emergency department or call 9-1-1. Should you advise a patient to attend the emergency department, please call ahead to the emergency department to let them know the patient was referred. Instruct the patient to inform on arrival the healthcare facility or staff that they are at risk of COVID-19, and should be masked immediately on entry.
- Patients who do not have a primary care provider can also be referred to 8-1-1 for assessment.

**Shelley Tice** [Shelley.Tice@viha.ca](mailto:Shelley.Tice@viha.ca)  
Interim Director, Primary and Community Care  
Office: 250.519.3500 ext 34568

**Dr. Steve Goodchild** [Steve.Goodchild@viha.ca](mailto:Steve.Goodchild@viha.ca)  
Medical Director, Primary Care  
Office: 250-370-8111 ext. 12747

**Dr. William Cunningham** [William.Cunningham@viha.ca](mailto:William.Cunningham@viha.ca)  
Department Head, Primary Care, Island Health  
Medical Director, Urban Greater Victoria, Portfolio 4, Island Health