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Plan for Return to Clinical Practice in Respect of Covid-19

This plan was developed with the goal of reducing the risk of exposure to the virus that causes Covid-19 for both patients and practitioners within our clinical setting. Here, we identify the actions that the practitioner and all visiting patients **MUST** commit to, in order to resume massage therapy and other in person treatments.

The overall aim of these protocols is to reduce potential transmission by:

- Required ongoing self-assessments to identify signs of illness in both patients and practitioners
- Reducing all physical, non-treatment related interactions amongst all people within the clinic space
- Discussing and increasing hand hygiene requirements
- Avoiding face touching
- Enhancing all cleaning protocols
- Implementing appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Meeting professional obligations, particularly related to informed consent and liability insurance

Pre-Screening / Prior to Arrival

- Patients will be informed about their responsibilities at the time of booking. A notice will be placed on the website and the online booking software will send them a copy of these protocols as part of a Covid-19 Specific Intake/Consent form which they will be required to sign electronically, **prior** to arriving at their appointment.
- The day before scheduled appointments, patients will be required to complete the online survey sent via email by VIP Therapy. BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment tool is the guide for this survey. Patients **MUST** stay home if they experience any symptoms of Covid-19.
 - o The tool can be found here: <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>
- Practitioners will contact patients prior to booked appointments if they have not finished the survey sent via email or if there are any questions that the practitioner has regarding the answers given.
- Practitioners will use the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment tool daily and commit to canceling all appointments if symptoms appear.
- Patient will be required to sign (electronically) a consent and liability waiver with respect to the Covid-19 pre-screening that the practitioner must complete **prior** to the start of treatment.

Upon Arrival

- Patients are asked to wait in their vehicles, outside the building or in the outdoor stairwell until they receive a text/call from the practitioner. This will ensure that they are ready for you and help decrease traffic in the clinic.
- All patients **MUST** wash their hands prior to entering the treatment space, preferably in the washroom with soap and water while abiding to proper hand washing guidelines. There will also be hand sanitizer available in the reception area to use upon entry.
- Masks are to be worn **AT ALL TIMES** within the clinic space. We will provide clean reusable masks upon entry that we prefer patients to use so that we may regulate quality and cleanliness of such items. If you choose to wear your own mask, we ask that it is clean and fresh. Disposable masks will be on premise and supplied for \$1 each

- Before entering the treatment room, patients will be asked a series of pre-screening questions similar to the previous survey sent. Patients must complete and verbally consent that they have no signs of Covid-19 as outlined here: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/symptoms>
- The treatment will be cancelled immediately if the patient does not meet the pre-screening criteria upon arriving or if the proper paperwork and consent forms have not been filled out before treatment.
- Patients must follow the instructions of the practitioner about where to go within the clinic space and look for markings on the floor to guide them into the treatment room.

Within the Treatment Room

Please note: It is not possible to maintain physical distancing in the treatment rooms at all times.

- We have marked an area for the practitioner and patient to stand separately while performing the interview part of assessment. If hands on assessment is needed then the practitioner will, as always, ask for consent.
- The door will be open for the patient to enter followed by the practitioner.
- There will be a clean plastic bin on the stool for the patient to put their personal belongings into. *Please try to refrain from using the wall hooks unless absolutely necessary.*
- After treatment, patients are asked to dress in a timely manner and then use the provided hand sanitizer to clean their hands before touching and opening the door.
- Patients are asked not to take anything out of their personal bag or purse until they arrive at the reception desk for payment and rescheduling. ***This includes cell phones***

After treatment

- Patients are to leave the treatment room and go directly to the reception desk for payment and rescheduling. We ask that social conversations stay within the treatment room to ensure that the practitioner has time to do thoroughly clean and is on time for their next appointment
- If the patient requires water, please ask the practitioner. We will try to have a small cup of water waiting at the reception desk for the patient.
- As the patient leaves the clinic space, we ask that they dispose of the mask in the proper receptacle at the front door.

Physical Distancing

- As a part of the consent form, patients must commit to understanding that while we've taken all possible measures to minimize risk of viral transmission, the nature of the treatments offered at VIP Therapy means that physical distancing is not possible in the treatment room.
- Patients are not permitted to lounge in the clinic reception area before or after the treatment.
- Practitioners and patients must be aware of each other and try to maintain a space of 2 meters (6 feet) between each other outside the treatment room. Please look for markings on the floor to help maintain this spacing. Your practitioner will direct you to such areas when permitted.
- Appointment times are specifically scheduled to allow for the staggering of start times between all practitioners. Staggering appointments will help to ensure that the traffic within the clinic space is at a minimum. This is also why the therapist will text/call you when they are ready for you.
- Patients are asked to try their best not to be late for appointments. Showing up late will not only affect the duration of your treatment but also increase the chance that more than one patient is in the reception area at the same time.

Hand Hygiene

- Before entering the clinic space the patient must either:
 - Go directly to the washrooms and wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and then dry thoroughly, or
 - Use the touchless hand sanitizer dispenser that is fixed to the wall just inside the clinic door
- If hands are visibly soiled, the patient MUST opt to wash hands in the washroom

- The practitioner will wash their hands/forearms/elbows thoroughly for at least 20 seconds between patients, before and after disinfecting spaces as well as donning and doffing all worn PPE (personal protection equipment)
- Hand washing protocols will be posted visibly in the reception area and at sinks.
- There is a tap option on the POS machine but some amounts may require the patient to key in information. The POS machine will be sanitized between each patient.
- Receipts will be emailed, not printed and handed to the patient
- Tissue will be available throughout the clinic in the reception area and treatment rooms. Patients and practitioners may use tissue to address an itch and/or touch the face for any other reason as well as to use as a barrier before touching door handles and equipment if preferred.

Enhanced Cleaning

- Additional time has been scheduled between patients to allow for thorough cleaning of the treatment room and reception area
- All high touch surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected between patients, regardless of appearances. High touch surfaces include (but are not limited to):
 - Light switches, door handles, POS machine, electronic devices, table surfaces, chairs, stools, faucets, phone as well as the equipment used such as treatment table, table levers, face cradle and lotion bottles
- No hydrotherapy supplies such as thermophores will be used.
- All linens, including blankets and pillowcases are single use only and will be laundered using high heat, detergent and bleach between each use.
- A disinfected plastic bin has been placed in the treatment room for patient personal belongings. This same bin will be used to carry used linens to the laundry room for washing.
- Bins will be disinfected between each patient before cycling back into use.

Personal Protective Equipment

- Practitioners **MUST** wear a face mask at all times within the clinic space.
- Practitioners face masks will be fresh and clean.
- Practitioners may wear non-latex gloves if/when appropriate.
 - Gloves may be appropriate when over-use of cleaning and/or chemicals causes skin irritation, or when the practitioner's hands or skin of the hands are otherwise injured.
 - Hands will be washed prior to putting the gloves on and immediately after removing them.
 - Gloves are also considered appropriate and will be worn by the therapist at the patient's request.
- Patients **MUST** wear a mask at all times within the clinic space. We will provide clean reusable masks upon entry that we prefer patients to use so that we may regulate quality and cleanliness of such items. If you choose to wear your own mask, we ask that it is clean and fresh. Disposable masks will be on premise and supplied for \$1 each

Professional Obligations

- Practitioners carry professional liability insurance through Wilson M. Beck as provided through the Registered Massage Therapist Association of BC (RMTBC) or from other sources depending on the practitioner.
- Practitioners are following all the health and safety guidelines outlined by the Registered Massage Therapists Association of BC (RMTBC), the College of Massage Therapists of British Columbia (CMTBC) and the Provincial Health Officer and they are taking all reasonable precautions to clean and disinfect the clinic and all the surfaces within the treatment room.
- No guarantees have been made by the practitioner that the patient may not come into contact with COVID-19 during a visit to the clinic.
- In the event that a patient tests positive for Covid-19 and the patient has been to any appointment within the 14-days prior to onset of symptoms, the patient acknowledges that they **MUST** contact the practitioner immediately and inform them of the positive test results and possible transmission of the virus

- In the event that a patient alleges they caught COVID-19 from the practitioner then the practitioner MUST immediately call public health at 8-1-1 to report the alleged transmission, providing both the name of the practitioner and the name and contact details of the patient. *The patient must agree to the release of this information under these circumstances in order to receive treatment.*

In both instances, future appointments will be cancelled, and the practitioner will cease to provide services until Public Health has investigated and provided direction. The practitioner will immediately self-isolate until Public Health has investigated and provided direction.

- In the event that the practitioner catches COVID-19 or displays symptoms of Covid-19, they will immediately self-isolate and call public health at 8-1-1 to report the symptoms and request access to Covid-19 testing. If testing is granted, future appointments will be cancelled, and the practitioner will cease to provide services until test results are given. If testing proves positive the practitioner will follow Public Health directives in informing patients treated over the previous 14 days about potential transmission. If testing is not granted, future appointments will be cancelled and the practitioner will cease to provide services for a minimum of 10-days beyond the onset of symptoms, and/or until symptoms cease.
- In the event that the practitioner comes into close contact with someone showing signs of illness/tests positive for Covid-19, future appointments will be cancelled and the practitioner will cease to provide services until either the practitioner and the close contact have been tested for Covid-19 and the results proved negative being cleared by a public health official OR the practitioner self isolates for 14 days in which no symptoms occur.

Informed Consent

In the current environment of Covid-19, informed consent requires that the patient be informed and understands that:

- Any treatment involves possible risk
- The patient consents to the treatment despite possible risk
- The practitioner is following protocols to help reduce or mitigate risk, but that risk cannot be reduced to zero
- The practitioner will document the patient's consent in advance and at every treatment.