

To: Nova Scotia Health Care Practitioners

From: Dr. Robert Strang, Chief Medical Officer of Health

Date: December 30, 2021

Re: **COVID-19 Contact Tracing Resources for Health Care Professionals**

Contact tracing is an important tool to help identify people who may have COVID-19 due to exposure to someone with COVID-19. It can also help prevent the virus from spreading in our communities. When a person tests positive for COVID-19, they become a case. People they have spent time with during their infectious period may be considered close contacts and should be notified.

A close contact is a person **exposed** to someone who tested positive for COVID-19 while that person was **infectious**. **Exposed** means any of the following:

- You were within six feet of the person for at least 15 minutes while indoors.
- You care for the person at home.
- You shared dishes, cups, forks or spoons with the person.
- The person coughed or sneezed near you.
- The person touched, hugged or kissed you.

A person with COVID-19 is considered **infectious**:

- Beginning 48 hours (two days) before symptoms started, or, if no symptoms, 48 hours before the positive test;
- Ending after 10 days from the start of symptoms (or 10 days from test date if no symptoms) AND feeling better (no fever and improving).

*Due to the recent increase in community spread of COVID-19, Public Health is now asking people who have been texted, phoned with results of a positive PCR test, or performed a positive Point of Care Test to let their close contacts know they have been **in close contact with a case of COVID-19**. Public Health focuses its contact tracing efforts on cases associated with congregate settings and communities.*

Some individuals may reach out to their Family Physician, Nurse Practitioner, and other health care providers for information on how to inform their contacts that they have been in close contact with a case of COVID-19.

Below are several resources from Nova Scotia Health that can assist your patients with letting their close contacts know what they need to do next:

Resources:

Information for people who have tested positive for COVID-19

<https://www.nshealth.ca/testedpositiveforcovid>

Understanding what it means to notify your close contacts.

http://policy.nshealth.ca/Site_Published/Provincial/document_render.aspx?documentRender.IdType=6&documentRender.GenericField=&documentRender.Id=92336

Information for COVID-19 Close Contacts

<https://www.nshealth.ca/information-covid-19-close-contacts>

What do I need to know about COVID-19 self-isolation?

<https://www.nshealth.ca/what-do-i-need-know-about-covid-19-self-isolation>

How to self-isolate

http://policy.nshealth.ca/Site_Published/covid19/document_render.aspx?documentRender.IdType=6&documentRender.GenericField=&documentRender.Id=91149