



## COVID Community Virtual Care Team (CCVCT)

The COVID Community Virtual Care Team (CCVCT) provides 24/7 virtual care availability for patients with a known COVID-19 diagnosis who do not have a current indication for hospital admission but who are at risk of clinical deterioration in the community. The intention is to facilitate home-based care whenever possible and to provide safe and rapid access to acute care facilities when transfer is clinically indicated. This team is a provincial service available to patients from any zone who meet all of the eligibility criteria.

Eligibility criteria (must meet ALL of the following criteria):

- Known diagnosis of COVID-19 (positive swab results only, those with pending tests are not eligible to be followed by this team)
- Day 2-14 after symptom onset
- Deemed to be at high risk of clinical deterioration given risk factors AND symptom severity\*
- Does not meet criteria for hospital admission
- Does not meet criteria for COVID-19 recovery (at least 10 days after symptom onset and afebrile with improving symptoms)

*\*risk factors: age>65, BMI>30, one or more chronic conditions (eg. heart failure, chronic lung disease, hypertension); severe symptoms: shortness of breath, clinical features of pneumonia*

Referral sources:

- Public health (will require notification to team to ensure pulse oximeter is distributed)
- Secondary assessment centres
- Emergency departments
- Inpatient COVID wards
- Primary Care offices

Referral process:

- Ensure patient meets ALL eligibility criteria
- Provide patient with a pulse oximeter with batteries (contains the phone number to access the team), patient information sheet, and return envelope
- Fax letter informing primary care provider that patient has been referred to the CCVCT
- Fax referral form to 902-405-4373

Discharge criteria:

- >14 days since symptom onset OR
- Meets definition for recovery: at least 10 days after symptom onset AND afebrile with improving symptoms

Patient Label

Your patient has been diagnosed with **COVID-19**. They do not currently meet criteria for hospital admission and are being discharged home from an emergency department, secondary assessment centre, or inpatient COVID unit. They have been identified by the treating team as being at risk of clinical deterioration in the community given their risk factors and severity of symptoms.

Given this identification of risk of clinical deterioration, your patient has been referred to the Community COVID Virtual Care Team (CCVCT) which will provide them with 24/7 access to phone support (and potentially video assessment) from a dedicated physician or nurse practitioner. They have also been discharged with a portable pulse oximeter to facilitate at home monitoring. Discharge instructions and monitoring parameters have been reviewed with them and they have also received a handout with this information for reference.

They have been advised to call the team at a phone number provided to them along with the pulse oximeter if they experience rapidly worsening shortness of breath, increased work of breathing, new onset chest pain, new onset confusion, and/or loss of function relative to baseline. They will also monitor their vital signs and phone the team if they have oxygen saturations <90% on room air, and/or RR >30 at rest.

Should they access this team by phone, they may be offered a video telehealth appointment via Telehealth Zoom for further assessment if deemed appropriate by the treating provider. In the event that transfer from the community to a local secondary assessment center or COVID inpatient unit is deemed necessary, the virtual team will coordinate a direct transfer to these units without the need for an emergency department visit.

Patients will be discharged from this team when they meet the following criteria: >14 days from symptom onset OR Meets definition for COVID-19 recovery (at least 10 days after symptom onset AND afebrile with improving symptoms). If they phone following discharge we will ask that they redirect their concern to their primary care provider.



**Referral form – FAX TO 902-405-4373**

Patient Label
Patient name: _____
DOB: _____
HCN: _____
Patient Address: _____
Patient Phone #: _____

Date of symptom onset: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of positive COVID-19 test: \_\_\_\_\_

Pulse oximeter number: \_\_\_\_\_

- Referral source:  Public Health  
 Emergency Department  
 Secondary Assessment Centre  
 Inpatient COVID ward  
 Primary Care Office  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

Location of referral source: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for referral: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check to confirm that the patient has verbally consented to being contacted by a research team who will be evaluating this clinic.**

**Eligibility Criteria**

- Known diagnosis of COVID-19 (positive swab results only, those with pending tests are not eligible to be followed by this team)
- Day 2-14 after symptom onset
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- Does not meet criteria for hospital admission
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\*risk factors: age>65, BMI>30, one or more chronic conditions (e.g. heart failure, chronic lung disease, hypertension); severe symptoms: shortness of breath, clinical features of pneumonia.

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do I access the pulse oximeter at my site?
  - a. Please contact the lead for Pulse Oximeters (see table below) for the Regional Hospital in your area. If you are within the hospital, ensure you use the tracking form to note which asset you have taken and given to the patient. If outside the hospital, contact the lead and they will arrange for the oximeter, patient information sheet and return envelope to be sent to the patient.

Zone	Site Name	Site Lead	Phone #
<b>Central</b>	Dartmouth General Hospital	Rachel Nalepa	902-717-3108
	Halifax Infirmery	Bev Dixon	902-229-4063
<b>Eastern</b>	St. Martha's Regional Hospital	Carla Bond	902-863-7796
	Cape Breton Regional Hospital	Deborah Neville	902-574-4981
<b>Northern</b>	Aberdeen Hospital	Dan Meagher	902-752-7600 E: 2960/4270
	Colchester East Hants Health Centre	Karen Swan	902-893-4321 E: 42132
	Cumberland Regional Health Care Centre	Norah Doucet	902-664-6256
<b>Western</b>	South Shore Regional Hospital	SAC (primary contact)	902-543-4603 E: 1686
		Melanie Nauss (secondary contact)	902-527-5084
	Valley Regional Hospital	SAC (primary contact)	902-599-3532
		Krista Golden (secondary contact available Monday to Friday 0800-1600)	902-698-9632
Yarmouth Regional Hospital	Michelle (Mitzi) Fitzgerald	902-774-1690	

2. Will this team see patients of any age?
  - a. Yes, there are no limitations on the ages of patients who can be referred to this team.
3. Are patients who are unattached (without a primary care provider) eligible for this service?
  - a. Yes, unattached patients will be followed during the course of their COVID. Upon discharge, they will follow existing supports in their respective area for unattached patients.
4. How will primary care providers be notified of their patient being enrolled in this program?
  - a. When the referral form is sent to the COVID Community Virtual Care Team, the referring provider will use the template on page two of this document to communicate with the primary care provider that their patient has been enrolled in this service.
5. Does the COVID Community Virtual Care Team contact all patients each day?
  - a. No, Public Health is continuing to contact all COVID patients daily. Patients are able to contact the on-call physician working in the COVID Community Virtual Care Team by using the 1-833 number located on their pulse oximeter. They should be directed to call as needed based on the guidance in the patient information sheet that is provided to them.
6. Who is working as part of the COVID Community Virtual Care Team?
  - a. The team is made up of family physicians and some specialists from different zones.