

PROCESS PROTOCOL:

Acute Oxygen Therapy for Nursing Home Residents with COVID-19

April 20, 2020

These protocols apply to the planning and implementation of oxygen therapy for **residents of DHW licensed and funded nursing homes who are positive for COVID-19**. These are interim measures for use during the pandemic and do not constitute permanent changes in oxygen therapy processes in long-term care. This protocol is in place until June 30, 2020.

Before a nursing home has a resident with COVID-19:

1. The nursing home will review their preparedness including the following:
 - Have a plan in place to obtain/order a concentrator quickly when needed.
 - Order a pulse oximeter if they do not already have one.
 - Confirm oxygen vendor(s) that serve their area and identify their approach to choosing an oxygen vendor(s), including back up if the first vendor cannot deliver in time or has supply issues.
 - Nursing homes will order from the oxygen vendors in their own area first.

When the nursing home has a resident with COVID-19:

Note: For greater clarity, a facility will obtain a concentrator once they have a resident that is positive for COVID-19 so that it is readily available when needed

2. The nursing home will coordinate with the oxygen vendor to arrange delivery of a concentrator to support timely access for oxygen therapy.
3. The oxygen vendor will provide backup oxygen cylinder and regulator which will be stored by the facility in accordance with the Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) regulations. The nursing home will be responsible to ensure proper storage.
4. The vendor will educate nursing home staff as necessary upon delivery of the concentrator.

When resident with COVID-19 has need for oxygen:

Note: For greater clarity this now means that the physicians and nurse practitioners caring for residents with COVID-19 can refer to home oxygen providers, as designated physicians are not required during this period.

5. The Physician or Nurse Practitioner providing care to the resident with COVID-19 will:
 - 5.1. Determine medical need for oxygen therapy.
 - 5.2. Complete an order for oxygen therapy. The order will be written or a verbal order with written order to follow within 72 hours.
6. The nursing home will notify the oxygen vendor of the order **and** to send a copy of the order to NSHA Continuing Care LTC Care Coordinator or designated primary contact Care Coordinator for the zone.

Note: NSHA needs to be notified of the date the concentrator arrived in the facility and completion date of oxygen therapy to ensure the billing can be reconciled and sent to DHW for payment.

If concentrator available on site and the nursing home nurse sets up therapy:

7. The nursing home nurse will initiate oxygen therapy within their scope of practice and based on their knowledge, skill and judgement.
8. The nursing home will notify the oxygen vendor that therapy has been initiated.

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9. The oxygen vendor will provide follow up to the nursing home within 24 hours of initiating therapy. This follow up may be telephone support, on site, or virtual visit
 - 9.1. This follow up may be in person, by phone or through visual media if technology is available and supports confidentiality.

If concentrator is not available on site (e.g. already in use):

10. The vendor will coordinate the place and time the concentrator can be delivered. Note: some homes may not want the vendor to enter the building or may have a designated area.
 - 10.1. If required, the nursing home may need to call EHS for support to bridge oxygen therapy until the oxygen vendor can deliver.
 - 10.2. If the first contacted oxygen vendor cannot provide service or within acceptable timeframe, the nursing home will call another oxygen vendor.

11. The oxygen vendor will:

- 11.1. Deliver equipment and if required by the facility, initiate oxygen therapy.
- 11.2. Remove and sanitize equipment between resident uses.
- 11.3. Submit invoice to NSHA as per normal practice for reconciliation **and** include the date the concentrator was delivered to the facility, name of resident and nursing home.
 - 11.3.1. If the concentrator has not been attached to a resident by the end of a given billing period, the vendor will give it a standard name of "COVID".

12. NSHA Continuing Care will process the referral for oxygen therapy upon receiving the order from the nursing home.

- 12.1. The Care Coordinator will obtain a funding authorization number as per usual process.

Note: For greater clarity, approval from the Care Coordinator will not be required before initiation of oxygen therapy for resident's positive for COVID-19

When nursing home no longer has need for concentrator for resident with COVID-19:

13. The nursing home will notify the oxygen vendor as soon as possible (within 24 hours at most) that the concentrator is no longer required.
14. The nursing home will notify the NSHA as soon as possible (within 24 hours at most) that the concentrator is no longer required.
15. The oxygen vendor will remove the equipment from the nursing home for cleaning and repurposing.

Use of PPE

16. Appropriate PPE for droplet and contact precaution (as per [NSHA IPAC Guidelines for LTC Settings](#)) should be available for use by care providers of residents on isolation requiring low flow supplemental oxygen.

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Concentrators owned by the facility:

17. There are a few nursing homes that have purchased oxygen concentrators. The nursing homes will need to contact the vendors privately for any servicing or maintenance required. The funding for this maintenance this does not fall under this agreement as oxygen vendors provide rental of equipment. However, during this period, DHW will support the cost of equipment maintenance for these concentrators when used for Covid positive residents only, through the COVID finance expense claim until June 30, 2020.

*Related Supporting Documents on the NSHA COVID-19 Resource Hub**

- [COVID-19 Goals of Care Discussions for LTC Residents: A Resource for Providers](#)
- [Discussing Goals of Care – A Worksheet for Health Care Providers in LTC](#)
- [NSHA IPAC Guidelines for LTC Settings](#)
- [Planning Ahead For Covid-19: A Resource for Families of Long-Term Care Residents](#)

See below:

- [DHW Home Oxygen Service Approved Vendor List](#)

**Stay up to date on most recent versions of these documents by monitoring the [NSHA COVID-19 Resource Hub](#) often.*

APPENDIX – Home Oxygen Service Approved Vendor List

Available : https://novascotia.ca/dhw/ccs/FactSheets/Home_Oxygen_Service_Approved_Vendor_List.pdf

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HOME OXYGEN SERVICE – APPROVED VENDOR LIST 2019-2020

All vendors on this list meet the requirements for home oxygen service delivery set by Continuing Care, Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness and are qualified to deliver safe and effective service.

Service Area	Vendor	Telephone	Fax
Zone 1- Western			
DISTRICT 1	FAMILY 1 ST MEDICAL RESPIRATORY THERAPY SPECIALISTS	1-800-565-2021 1-877-469-3749	1-902-252-3170 1-902-469-2694
DISTRICT 2	FAMILY 1 ST MEDICAL MEDIGAS	1-800-565-2021 1-866-446-6302	1-902-252-3170 1-902-468-7702
DISTRICT 3	FAMILY 1 ST MEDICAL RESPIRATORY THERAPY SPECIALISTS	1-800-565-2021 1-877-469-3749	1-902-252-3170 1-902-469-2694
Zone 2 – Northern			
DISTRICT 4	FAMILY 1 ST MEDICAL RESPIRATORY THERAPY SPECIALISTS	1-800-565-2021 1-877-469-3749	1-902-252-3170 1-902-469-2694
DISTRICT 5	FAMILY 1 ST MEDICAL MEDIGAS	1-800-565-2021 1-866-446-6302	1-902-252-3170 1-902-468-7702
DISTRICT 6	RESPIRATORY THERAPY SPECIALISTS VITALAIRE HEALTHCARE	1-877-469-3749 1-800-361-5939	1-902-469-2694 1-902-450-5137
Zone 3 – Eastern			
DISTRICT 7	MEDIGAS VITALAIRE HEALTHCARE	1-866-446-6302 1-800-361-5939	1-902-468-7702 1-902-450-5137
DISTRICT 8	FAMILY 1 ST MEDICAL MEDIGAS VITALAIRE HEALTHCARE	1-800-565-2021 1-866-446-6302 1-800-361-5939	1-902-252-3170 1-902-468-7702 1-902-450-5137
Zone 4 – Central			
DISTRICT 9	FAMILY 1 ST MEDICAL MEDIGAS RESPIRATORY THERAPY SPECIALISTS	1-800-565-2021 1-866-446-6302 1-877-469-3749	1-902-252-3170 1-902-468-7702 1-902-469-2694