

CCIR#34.0

**CONTINUING CARE
INFORMATION RELEASE**

TO: Nursing Homes
Home Oxygen Service Providers

CC: Susan Stevens, Senior Director, Continuing Care, Nova Scotia Health Authority
Robert Lafferty, Director, Investigation and Compliance, DHW
Shelley Jones, Manager, Continuing Care, DHW

FROM: Paula Langille, Director, Continuing Care, DHW

DATE: April 28, 2020

RE: Acute Oxygen Therapy for Nursing Home Residents with COVID 19
Funding for Staffing of Isolation Units in Department of Health and Wellness
Licensed and Funded Nursing Homes

To optimize access and flow capacity and better respond to increased system pressures resulting from COVID-19, the Department of Health and Wellness (DHW) is making exceptions to the Home Oxygen Program. The exceptions will support residents in DHW licensed and funded Nursing Homes who may require acute oxygen therapy as a result of contracting COVID-19. The goals are to expedite referrals and eliminate the financial barrier to access therapy, while providing comfort for the resident, maintaining care where they live, and to avoid hospitalization.

In alignment with temporary exceptions for the current home oxygen program, nursing home residents with COVID-19 who have an identified need for acute oxygen therapy will be approved for funding for up to 4 weeks and a reassessment must take place in order for funding to be extended.

Please refer to the attached process protocol.

To meet the needs of COVID-19 positive resident there will likely be the need for additional professional staff who have the assessment skills and knowledge to provide the necessary care. In consideration for the level of care required, DHW will provide financial support for additional clinical staffing for isolation units when you have presumptive and positive residents. Once a facility is in an outbreak situation, discussions with DHW will occur and staffing requirements will be discussed including additional supports that will help facilitate the care and support of those positive residents.

As well, as a precautionary step to help with the prevention and spread of COVID-19 in facilities, the department is prepared to support extra housekeeping resources.

Costs, as outlined above, are to be submitted through the COVID-19 expense tracking process.

Attachments: Process Protocol: Acute Oxygen Therapy for Nursing Home Residents with COVID-19