



July 7, 2021

Why are we still required to do all this when the rest of the province is back to normal?

We are a regulated health profession, and as such, are expected to uphold the highest standard in ensuring public health and safety.

How long will these requirements and recommendations be in effect?

The ACAC Registrar and Council will review this guide by mid-August and will adjust them to be in line with new requirements or recommendations from the CMOH and Alberta Health.

Why keep the screening questions? Everyone knows what to do...

We are aware that continuing to screen patients is an additional step and that some view it as unnecessary. Screening may be more important now than ever, as with eased restrictions for public health measures and vaccine uptake, we anticipate that people will be less aware of their symptoms. To keep yourself, your staff and other patients safe during eased pandemic restrictions screening ensures that your clinic is less likely to come in contact with the COVID virus.

If I don't have to mask at the grocery store, why do I have to mask in clinic?

Unlike workers in a grocery store, chiropractors are consistently in close contact with their patients, which elevates the risk of transmission from patients and to patients. While the requirement for masking is a recommendation only, masking is a proven way to reduce and protect against transmission.

Dr. Hinshaw has asked all regulated health professionals to do everything in their power to protect community health.

Why is eye protection still recommended?

Currently, the ACAC **strongly recommends** chiropractors and staff in all practice settings continue to utilize eye protection if they are providing direct patient care within two metres. **This will help to limit your risk of being deemed a close contact should you be in close contact with an asymptomatic infected patient at the time of care.**

Did you even hear our comments from the ThoughtExchange?

The Registrar reviewed all comments put into the ThoughtExchange and is taking them into consideration. The Registrar will balance those comments with the College's legislated requirements and responsibilities and the recommendations and direction from Alberta Health, the Emergency Operations Centre, and the Chief Medical Officer of Health, when preparing the College response.

What is the status of the letter to Dr. Hinshaw?

The letter is being drafted, as we were waiting to receive further guidance from the province on the direction they were planning to take. By doing so, we ensured we weren't recommending actions that the province was already planning on taking.

What about returning toys, magazines and other materials to waiting rooms?

Items that cannot be effectively cleaned and disinfected between use must not be present in the clinic environment (e.g. magazines or toys in waiting areas). This includes but is not limited to exercise equipment if it cannot be properly disinfected, items with porous fabric upholstery, and treatment beds with torn surfaces or patched with tape.

What should I do if a patient, or staff, refuses to wear a mask for treatment?

The decision to treat unmasked patients is the purview of the practitioner providing care. You can take proven steps to reduce risk, such as ensuring the patient is actively screened prior to entering the clinic environment, performing point-of-care assessments, making appointments as opposed to walk-in care whenever possible, using transparent barriers such as a face shield to cover the face, having clinic staff wear masks and other PPE, designate clinic space and specific treatment times for unmasked patient consultation and treatment.

What are other regulated health professionals doing?/ My RMT/physio/other is not required to do these things, why is the College being so strict?

Each regulated health professional is being asked to uphold the act in the interest of the public's health. Even though there are no public restrictions, we are still in a pandemic and have a responsibility to provide safe, ethical care that considers the pandemic environment. The recommendations and requirements made by the ACAC were created with guidance from AHS and from our mandate of protecting the public.

Where do I get information on preparing an OHS plan?

Additional information about OHS requirements and legislation can be found at <https://www.alberta.ca/occupational-health-safety.aspx>.

Why the increased discussion about OHS risks and planning now?

OHS signaled to all regulated health professions last year that they would start to be more active in our sector. Regulated members of the ACAC who employ Albertans are accountable to the Occupational Health and Safety Act as employers. The ACAC is reminding you of your obligation to ensure that regulated members understand that beyond the requirements to practice, they have requirements as employers. OHS requires that employers have plans for a safe work environment, that staff are educated on those plans, and have the opportunity to ask questions.

One key consideration at this time for employers is that COVID-19 is a potential biohazard in the workplace, and you are well advised to develop OHS plans and policies that reflect employee safety.

