

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Health PEI Executive Leadership and Leadership Forum
FROM: Kelley Rayner, Operations Branch Director, COVID-19 Joint Response Team
DATE: April 1, 2020
SUBJECT: Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance on referrals and consults

The following information is provided to physicians and nurse practitioners regarding services and referrals during the COVID-19 response.

Provincial Geriatric Program Acute Care Consults during COVID-19

The Provincial Geriatric Program is in the midst of planning essential services and the support to both hospital and community patients is at the heart of that plan. We have looked at the services across the country and there seems to be agreement that COVID-19 is significantly more harmful to seniors in particular, so inpatient stays (or visits to hospital in general) are not desirable.

The provision of phone support/advice to MDs and NPs, both in acute care and in the community, is preferred whenever possible, not only because it preserves minimal face to face contact, but allows us to use our minimal resources most effectively.

We ask that all requests for consultation be communicated through the Geriatric Program office (902-432-2860) so that we can prioritize phone vs. face to face interactions and assign the most appropriate clinician.

Your help in identifying inpatient candidates who would most benefit from this service would be appreciated in an effort to most efficiently move frail seniors out of hospital.

We are still focusing on our COACH program in the community and the bulk of this work will be done by our NPs in collaboration with the Kings and Queens Home Care teams. This will aim to prevent unnecessary ED visits and hospital admissions.

For more information, please contact Elaine Campbell at 902-432-2861.

Newborn follow-up

Newborns at Prince County Hospital who live in East or West Prince will be seen in follow-up by their regular family physician or nurse practitioner. Should their regular provider not be available at this time, they will be assigned to a new family doctor for the time being.

The pediatrics group at the QEH has agreed to take over routine well-baby visits for family doctors and nurse practitioners in Kings and Queens counties, up to and including the two month visit, during the COVID-19 pandemic. **This is an opt-out process.** Unless a family doctor or NP notifies the QEH Pediatric Clinic that they wish to opt out, these babies will be seen by Ellen Stetson, Neonatal NP, Dr. Brown, Neonatologist, or one of the QEH pediatricians. They will

be seen for a two-week and two-month visit. The one-month visit will be either a telephone or in-person visit, depending on the individual situation. To opt out, please send fax to QEH Pediatric Clinic [902-894-2477](tel:902-894-2477).

A paper record of the appointments will be sent to the family doctor or NP after the two-month visit. No referral needed for babies born at QEH after March 23 at 8 am. For babies born before March 23 at 8 am, or not born at QEH, **and** who have not yet had their two-month well-baby visit, please send a referral to the QEH Pediatric clinic, stating "well baby care".

Prenatal care

At this time, OBGYNs across the province are prepared to assume the prenatal care of pregnant women at any gestational age. Both family physicians and nurse practitioners are invited to refer any pregnant patients they wish. We understand that you are very busy with other things right now and recognize that advice is changing by the hour during this pandemic, even with regards to care of the pregnant patient.

Prenatal visits may be altered to a different schedule than usual and, if so, will be arranged following appropriate local guidelines. If you are continuing to provide prenatal care, please familiarize yourself with these suggestions. We would suggest that the patients be referred to the site they plan to deliver at for prenatal care so as to ensure her needs are appropriately planned for.

Patients should be prepared for limited to no visitation at office appointments, ultrasounds and during their hospital stay. They may wish to be discharged early from hospital and plans are being made for this possibility as well as for the support of new moms and their babies in their communities after delivery.

We will continue to care for our post-surgical deliveries and as well, any other patient with complicated postpartum needs either in person or virtually. Routine postpartum visits if the mother has no concerns are not necessary, however, please do not forget about her contraceptive needs. We remain available for phone consultation at any time if you need any further guidance.

Thank you.