

PEI Operating Procedures During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

Proposed schedule:

- Reduced business hours:
 - Services provided by appointment only on Mondays & Wednesdays 9-12pm
 - Beginning on Wednesday, 4/8/2020

Staffing:

- 1 front office staff to triage patients who need services and to post any charges for services performed.
- 1 provider
 - 1 will see scheduled appointments between 9 and 12; additional duties may include processing email and phone requests for supplies, log and process new deliveries, send out repairs.

Services to be provided:

- Repairs-urgent
- Supplies necessary for function of device (curbside only)
- Earmold impressions if necessary for function of device

Note: No routine (non-urgent/non-emergency) services will be offered during the partial/limited opening of PEI.

Virus mitigation strategies to be used:

- Front office staff will triage patients by phone to determine if an in-person appointment is necessary
 - When possible, provider will assist the patient with troubleshooting by phone
 - If device(s) aren't functioning and cannot be restored remotely, an appointment will be scheduled for the patient.
 - While setting up the appointment, front office staff will ask about the following:
 - Has the patient had any of the following symptoms within the last 14 days?
 - Fever
 - Cough or difficulty breathing
 - Stomach/GI symptoms
 - Does the patient fit into any of the following categories?
 - People aged 65 years and older
 - People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
 - Other high-risk conditions could include:
 - People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
 - People who have serious heart conditions

- People who are immunocompromised including cancer treatment
 - If the patient answers yes to any of the triage questions, they will be told that they should not come into the clinic themselves. Instead, they are encouraged to send a representative with their device.
- Waiting area mitigation:
 - Seating will be limited to no more than 2 people at a time.
 - All non-essential items with potential touch surfaces (brochure displays, pen cups, etc.) will be removed to allow for more thorough and efficient cleaning.
 - Counter and chairs will be wiped down between patients.
 - Doorknobs will be wiped down between patients.
- Patients will be offered “wait where you are comfortable” service
 - Telephone check-in: patient can call when they arrive and they will be checked in for their appointment over the phone. If paperwork is needed, it will be brought to their vehicle so that they can remain in the vehicle until it’s time for their appointment.
 - Curbside service for repairs and pickups: patient may remain in their vehicle while repair services are performed; they can be called or text messaged when their devices are available for pick-up
 - This will be strongly encouraged when possible.
 - Waiting room service: if they chose to stay in the waiting area, seating arrangements will be positioned to allow for appropriate social distancing.
- Due to the limitation of providers in the office, only one exam room will be allotted per provider. The rest of the office will remain closed, with the exception of the hearing aid workroom where supplies are kept.
- Appointments will be scheduled with a buffer of blocked time between each appointment so that only one patient will be served at a time.
- Providers, staff members, and patients will their temperature taken upon arriving at the clinic; anyone with a temperature above 100.4 will be asked to go home.
- Providers and administrative staff members will utilize personal protective equipment as follows:
 - Wear a mask during all patient encounters
 - reusable cloth mask (that will be washed between sessions), disposable surgical mask, or N-95 mask.
 - Wear gloves during patient encounters
 - Wear gloves to handle devices
- Additionally, each provider will wash hands for 20+ seconds before and after patient encounters, and disinfect all touch and splash surfaces with germicidal bleach solution before bringing the next patient into the exam room.
- If patients need to be seen in the clinic, they will be asked to wear a surgical mask upon entry to the waiting room area, and continue wearing the mask until after they leave the clinic.
- At the end of business (12pm) the office staff will do a deep cleaning of the front desk, waiting area, and each exam room used. This will include door handles, pens, clipboards, seating area, front desk surface, telephones, and diagnostic equipment that was handled during the provision of patient care.
- All reusable items (tympanometry tips, cerumen removal devices, etc.) will be cleaned in the ultrasonic cleaner for 3 minutes to remove gross contamination then cold sterilized using Sporox (7.5% hydrogen peroxide solution) for a minimum of 6 hours (overnight).