



Nova Scotia College of Chiropractors Board Regulation: In-person care during pandemic

*Approved by
the Board of
the NSCC*

Effective April 15, 2020

Revised

Pages 3

Board Regulation pursuant to section 6(2)(a) of the Chiropractic Act respecting: Use of in-person care for emergency and urgent conditions during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Intent: The intent of this Regulation is to provide members of the Nova Scotia College of Chiropractors (NSCC) with clear direction on what constitutes emergency/urgent care and how to apply safe practices during the current global pandemic.

Under the Order by the Medical Officer of Health under Section 32 of the *Health Protection Act* 2004, c.4, s.1 dated March 24, 2020 (the “Order”), chiropractors have been granted limited ability to provide in-person care for emergency or urgent conditions. Section 20 of the Order states that, effective March 23, 2020:

“(a.) except physicians, pharmacists, nurse practitioners, nurses and paramedics all self-regulated health professions and podiatrists engaged in private practice may provide (in) person emergency or urgent care services, and may provide virtual care for non-emergency/elective care services if authorized to provide this care within their scope of practice and as established by their governing college.”

In a Board notice dated March 26, 2020, the Board defined emergency/urgent care as:

1. Care for patients experiencing a sudden and debilitating change in functional abilities (such as walking, standing, sitting, lifting floor-to-waist or waist-to-shoulder, stair climbing, ladder climbing, etc.) or significant restrictions (experienced during bending/twisting, repetitive movement, pushing/pulling with right/left arm).
2. Treatment aimed at alleviating significant pain. This is understood as pain that is incapacitating for the patient and interferes with their ability to carry out normal functioning.

For further clarification, members should consider the following questions when determining if a patient requires in-person emergency or urgent care:

- Does the patient's condition require immediate attention?
- Is the patient's pain significant or debilitating?
- Is the patient experiencing a loss of function that is significant or debilitating?
- Is the patient's condition significantly affecting their ability to carry out their activities of daily living or impacting their safety?
- Are there signs and symptoms of a musculoskeletal or neurological condition that can be clearly demonstrated and that if not addressed, would cause the patient to seek care at a medical facility?
- Has the patient experienced a trauma that must be assessed in person in order to provide appropriate care?
- Does the patient have an acute condition where there is significant evidence that postponing care at this time will negatively affect their outcome?
- Does the risk of not providing in-person care outweigh the risk of possible exposure to the Covid-19 virus in another setting?

Relying on patient preference for determining the need for in-person care is not acceptable in establishing the need for in-person emergency or urgent care. When triaging patients, the chiropractor should always start with the assumption that in-person care is not required.

It is important for the chiropractor to keep in mind that emergency or urgent care does not always indicate the need for ongoing in-person care. Once in-person care is provided for an emergency or urgent situation, the chiropractic should evaluate the patient's progress for possible discharge to an at-home care plan or further visits by virtual care where appropriate.

If in-person care is deemed appropriate, the member should follow the guidelines of public health including, but not limited to:

1. Pre-screening of patients (preferably over the phone prior to the in-person visit). Pre-screening should include the following questions:
 - a) Do you have any of the following:
 - cough;
 - sneezing;
 - fever;
 - sore throat;
 - difficulty breathing?
 - b) Have you travelled outside of Nova Scotia within the past 14 days?
 - c) Have you been tested for or diagnosed with a confirmed or presumptive case of Covid-19?
 - d) Have you been in contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with a

confirmed or presumptive case of Covid-19 within the past 14 days?

2. Maintaining social distancing of 2 meters in all public spaces and wherever possible.
3. Requiring the patient to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer prior to or upon entering the clinic.
4. Spacing of appointment times in order to limit the number of people within the clinic at any one time to 5 people or less.
5. Enhanced cleaning and sanitization practices between patients.
6. Appropriate hand washing between patients.
7. Use of personal protective equipment (gloves, masks, eye protection, gowns) where appropriate.

It is important to clearly communicate to the public that your clinic is temporarily closed to in-person care. Members should not list on websites, social media or in any form of patient communication that their clinic is “open for emergency care”. You may indicate that your clinic is “closed except for emergency care” and provide information on how you can be contacted to determine if emergency care is needed. You may also indicate your ability to provide Telehealth services if you have received authorization by the Registrar.

As regulated health professionals, we all have the responsibility of ensuring that members of the NSCC are providing appropriate care and not treating outside of the order from the Chief Medical Officer of Health. It is a privilege that we have been given the ability to provide in-person care for emergency or urgent conditions, and this privilege should not be taken for granted. If you have concerns about the actions of another member, please contact the Pathfinder office at inquiries@chiropractors.ns.ca.

NSCC members are reminded that you must continue to follow your scope of practice. The link below provides direction regarding false or misleading claims. It should be noted that making “false or misleading claims to prevent, treat or cure COVID-19 is illegal in Canada” and is also in violation of the scope of practice of chiropractors in the province of Nova Scotia.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks.html#f>