

Memo

To: GTA COVID-19 Assessment Centres, Emergency Departments, Inpatient Units, Shelter, Support & Housing Administration

From: COVID-19 Isolation & COVID+ Site Project Partners: Inner City Health Associates, University Health Network, Parkdale Queen West CHC, The Neighbourhood Group, City of Toronto and Toronto Public Health.

Date: December 24, 2021

Re: Update regarding the COVID Recovery and Isolation Site for Homeless and Shelter clients

The City of Toronto Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA), Toronto Public Health (TPH) and its partners remain committed to promoting and enhancing best practices in Infection Prevention and Control as the Omicron variant increases demands across all sectors including healthcare, sheltering and homelessness supports.

In the context of widespread Omicron transmission in the general community, the City of Toronto SSHA has implemented a range of critical measures to support clients and staff in the homelessness sector. Toronto Public Health has provided detailed guidance throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to the homelessness sector on the creation of effective isolation spaces within congregate shelter settings to ensure all shelter residents have a place to isolate safely with support. In addition, a COVID Isolation and Recovery site has operated with health and social care services for those requiring additional supports during their isolation period.

The following are the changes to the criteria for transfer to the COVID Isolation & Recovery Site that has intensive clinical, harm reduction and peer social care supports:

- **Individuals who test positive from a congregate shelter (non-hotel)** should continue to be referred to the COVID-19 Isolation & Recovery Site for isolation.
- **Individuals who are close contacts or test positive for COVID-19 from physical distancing hotel programs** (i.e. hotel shelters) will remain at their existing hotel for in-situ isolation following guidance provided by Toronto Public Health. Toronto Public Health, SSHA, Parkdale Queen West CHC (by way of the MOVID team), Inner City Health Associates, and The Neighborhood Group will work closely with hotel shelters in outbreaks to formulate in-situ isolation plans and identify where additional support may be required including potential transfer to the COVID-19 Isolation & Recovery site.
- **Individuals who are symptomatic close contacts or have high clinical or substance use care needs** can be referred to the COVID-19 Isolation & Recovery site and will be assessed by SSHA, harm reduction and clinical teams for potential admission.

All individuals who are identified by TPH as being asymptomatic close contacts of a confirmed case of COVID-19 should isolate in-situ at their existing sheltering site.

For those individuals who will be isolating in-situ, the City of Toronto Shelter, Support and Housing Administration will continue to work with shelter operators to ensure that all are able to offer isolation following the guidance by Toronto Public Health. Both Inner City Health Associates and the mobile COVID Team (MOVID) operated by Parkdale Queen West CHC and The Neighbourhood Group are working with the City of Toronto SSHA to provide clinical, harm reduction and social care supports where necessary during in-situ isolation.

The City of Toronto SSHA, Toronto Public Health and their partners will continue to closely monitor and support the complex and rapidly evolving nature of the current COVID-19 Omicron wave and will provide updates as new developments arise.

If you have any questions about the referral criteria for the recovery site please contact sshacovidreferral@toronto.ca.