

# Home Care service during the COVID-19 pandemic

We understand that you may have questions and concerns about COVID-19 (coronavirus) and how it may impact our programs and services. This fact sheet is intended to help answer some questions you and your family may have. If you have any additional questions, please contact your Nova Scotia Health Care Coordinator or call 1-800-225-7225.

## What can I expect when receiving home care during the pandemic?

We are working with the government and home care agencies to ensure people receive the care they need safely. We are doing everything we can to make sure your care needs are met in the event that services are disrupted. This may not always be possible so it is important that you have a backup plan.

We are making changes to our programs and services. These changes may impact your scheduled services or the way that you receive care. We are also offering new options to meet people's needs. Talk to your Care Coordinator to see if these options may work for you.

## How can I get ready in case services are not available?

Try to make other care arrangements, if possible. For example:

- Review your back-up plan with your Care Coordinator or home support agency.** All home care clients must have a back-up plan (for example, due to a storm); this is especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Contact your Care Coordinator or home support agency.** If you are unsure who to call, contact Continuing Care (toll-free) at 1-800-225-7225 and we will help you.

## What are home care workers doing to protect clients and their families?

All home care workers are trained in infection prevention and control, including specific practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Health care workers who work directly with clients in their homes are also prioritized to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. All home care agencies continue to follow Public Health direction. For example, all home care workers will:

- wear a mask in your home
- stay at least 2 meters (6 feet) away from other people (social distancing) unless required for care
- report any symptoms to their supervisor and do not report to work if they have symptoms

- ask you and others in your home screening questions before they enter your home
- check in with you regularly to see if you have any symptoms
- complete a point of care risk assessment every time they interact with you to provide care
- clean surfaces, equipment, etc.

## What can I do to stay safe?

Working together, we can keep each other and our communities healthy and safe. We can all help prevent the spread of COVID-19 by taking a few simple but important steps:

- Limit the number of people you have close contact with.
- Limit the number of people who are in your home when the home support worker is there.
- Stay at least 2 meters (6 feet) away from other people.
- Wear a mask when you cannot stay 2 meters away from other people.
- Wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand rub often.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow, then clean your hands.
- Clean surfaces that you touch often.
- If you or someone in your home has symptoms, notify your service provider when they arrive, keep your distance from others, stay in your home and call 811.
- Get vaccinated when you have the opportunity.

It is important that you and your family stay informed. Reliable sources for information include:

- Government of Nova Scotia: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus>
- Government of Canada: <https://canada.ca/coronavirus> Phone (toll-free): 1-833-784-4397
- Nova Scotia Health: <http://www.nshealth.ca/coronavirus>

## Caregiving during COVID-19

We understand that these disruptions are difficult. It is important to take care of yourself. Self-care is an essential part of caring for someone else.

### Resources:

- Caregivers Nova Scotia <https://www.caregiversns.org/resources/>
- Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia <https://alzheimer.ca/ns/en>
- 211 Nova Scotia <https://ns.211.ca/>
- Government of Canada: Resources for seniors and their caregivers <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/resources-older-adults-caregivers.html>

**We are committed to ensuring you receive the care that you need. We appreciate your understanding and patience as we come together as a community to respond to COVID-19.**