



Provincial Dental Board of Nova Scotia

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Update on COVID-19 Measures – July 6, 2022

On July 4, 2022, Dr. Robert Strang, Nova Scotia's Chief Medical Officer of Health, announced an end to all remaining COVID-19 restrictions in the community effective today, July 6. He stated that most restrictions in high-risk settings will remain in place. The related news release can be found [at this link](#).

Although isolation mandates will be lifted, Nova Scotians who test positive for COVID-19 are encouraged to isolate, as well as others who have symptoms of respiratory illness. These individuals should also avoid high-risk settings and contact with people at higher risk.

While masking is optional in community settings, it is strongly recommended for people who are ill or in a crowded indoor setting.

The PDBNS will continue to align with Nova Scotia Health's guidelines for healthcare facilities, which includes physician's offices. As such, masks will continue to be mandatory for all individuals in dental offices. This applies to staff, patients, and others entering the office.

Masks will not be mandatory for dental office staff while in closed staff areas such as private offices, lunchrooms, and kitchens unless dictated by a site-specific policy.

Once again, we would like to highlight some Infection Control and Prevention (IPAC) measures which will also remain in effect and are not COVID-19 specific. These measures are either in the [NSDA 2013 Guideline](#) or will be in the updated IPAC Standard which is in its final editing and approval process. These measures include:

- keeping operatories decluttered to facilitate surface disinfection between patients
- diligent hand hygiene and [cough etiquette](#)
- wearing masks and eye protection at all times during patient care and when processing contaminated instruments
- wearing patient-specific gowns or lab coats for AGPs or during procedures likely to generate splatter or droplets of blood, body fluids, secretions, or excretions
- removal of clinic attire (e.g., scrubs) before leaving the clinic
- advising staff and patients to refrain from coming to the office when sick

Government's July 4 news release clearly states that if a workplace has occupational health policies that are stricter than the general public health recommendations, such as mandatory masking or isolation requirements, people must continue to follow those policies. Accordingly, as mentioned in the [March 19, 2022 Advisory](#), registrants and dental practices are free to implement or maintain additional measures as they deem appropriate according to their own clinical judgement and considering their practice profile/setting.

The other Nova Scotia oral health regulators may have additional specific guidance for their registrants.

We will continue to monitor recommendations from the office of the CMOH, as well as Nova Scotia Health's policies, and adapt accordingly should public or occupational health measures be altered. Again, much appreciation goes to all oral healthcare providers, staff, and the public for their cooperation and patience during the pandemic.

Sincerely,

Dr. Doug Mackey,
Registrar