

MEMO

Date: April 6, 2020
To: Psychologists on Medical Staff (Shared Health, WRHA, IERHA, SHSS, PMH, NRHA)
From: **Dr. Lesley Graff**, Provincial Specialty Lead, Clinical Health Psychology
CC: Chief Medical Officers
Dr. Alan Slusky, Registrar, Psychological Association of Manitoba
Re: **COVID-19 – Virtual Services to Northwestern Ontario patients & jurisdictional practice considerations**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, clinical services across Manitoba have quickly shifted to telepsychology and virtual clinics where possible, in order to ensure continuity of care and facilitate patient and staff safety. This change in how clinical services are delivered means that patients are now receiving care in their home.

Providing virtual psychological care to our Northwestern Ontario patients, who have access to health system services in Manitoba's health regions where applicable through inter-government agreement, would result in out of jurisdiction practice, unless the Psychologist is licensed in Ontario with C.P.O., in addition to being licensed in Manitoba with P.A.M.

Discussions with Dr. Rick Morris, Registrar and Executive Director, the College of Psychologists of Ontario, and Dr. Alan Slusky, Registrar, Psychological Association of Manitoba, have identified an interim solution to ensure geographic boundaries do not inadvertently undermine access to care.

As of April 1, 2020, health region Psychology services normally accessed by Northwestern Ontario residents (i.e., those west of Thunder Bay) in-person in Manitoba can be provided virtually across the provincial border for existing and new patients during the COVID-19 pandemic period. This enables delivery of virtual care to patients' NW Ontario location.

Any Psychologist who is on medical staff with the health regions providing this virtual care to NW Ontario patients and who is not licensed to practice in Ontario, needs to contact the College of Psychologists of Ontario prior to first initiating these services. You must advise them of the following:

1. Your name; jurisdiction where you are licensed for practice; license number

2. The health region in which you hold medical staff privileges; and that you are providing essential care virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic period to patients in Northwestern Ontario
3. Attest that you:
 - a. *Are registered/licensed and in good standing with the Psychological Association of Manitoba at the time the services are provided;*
 - b. *Will practice only within your areas of competence and in keeping with any terms, limits and conditions on your license/certificate of registration;*
 - c. *Are providing the services to existing or new clients in Northwestern Ontario due to the COVID-19 situation;*
 - d. *Have determined it is clinically ill-advised to temporarily stop services and/or to transfer the service to a member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario.*

Psychologists are to contact the College by email cpo@cpo.on.ca to the attention of the Registrar, Dr. Morris, and copy Manitoba's Registrar, Dr. Alan Slusky at pam@mymts.net.

Those on medical staff with Clinical Health Psychology (SH, WRHA, PMH, IERHA, SH-SS) are also asked to copy the CHP Medical Director (Dr. Lesley Graff lgraff@hsc.mb.ca).

At the time virtual services cease to Northwestern Ontario patients in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic response, psychologists are to advise the CPO and PAM Registrars of same.