

MEMORANDUM

TO: Directors/Operators of Licensed Child Care

FROM: Rola AbiHanna, Director, Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Branch

DATE: May 7, 2021

SUBJECT: Implementation of temporary measures

First, thank you again for the work you are doing to support families who need to work during this wave of COVID-19. You are an important part of the effort for all Nova Scotians. We continue to meet with public health, the sector representatives, including unions and continue to discuss the issues and questions brought forward.

As part of that ongoing Public Health review and sector discussions, please be advised that the following temporary measures are being implemented. These have been designed, in consultation with Public Health, to provide additional layers of protection for child care settings while Nova Scotia is experiencing higher rates of community transmission of COVID-19.

Until further notice, all regulated child care centres must comply with the following:

- operate at reduced capacity of less than 60%. Public Health is working with Education and Early Childhood Development to support individual centres located in areas with high community spread to further reduce capacity. Beginning next week, Early Childhood Development Consultants will be contacting centres, starting in Halifax Regional Municipality, to discuss the current capacity of the centre and cohort groupings of children. We will work collaboratively with centres to develop a strategy to keep group size as small and consistent as possible.
- active daily screening of all staff and children using the COVID-19 Daily Checklist is required. Families and staff should confirm and document they/their child has no symptoms and is not required to self-isolate.
- aerosol-generating medical procedures (AGMP) (e.g., tracheal suctioning and nebulized medications) should not occur in child care settings at this time. Please note, use of an inhaler is not considered an AGMP.
- as an extra layer of precaution, we are providing face shields to be worn daily by care providers, due to the close contact that is part of an early childhood setting. All child care centres with active PPE accounts will receive shields as early as Monday or Tuesday latest (Cape Breton locations). Note, the shields being sent require self-assembly. If you need to set up an account, please contact by email pperequest@novascotia.ca and include name of Centre, name of the primary contact and primary contact email address.

Instructions for cleaning face shields are available on the NS Health Authority website at:
http://policy.nshealth.ca/Site_Published/covid19/document_render.aspx?documentRender.IdType=6&documentRender.GenericField=&documentRender.Id=78717

As noted above, these additional layers of protection are being implemented based on the current epidemiology, and in response to the concerns, request and suggestions you have raised over the past weeks. We are confident that with your help and continued dedication, we will be able to provide the highest quality care to our youngest children with increased safety for all.