

April 24, 2020

Dear CLOC Families,

I would like to let each of you know that CLOC is thinking about you and your families during this time, and hope everyone is staying safe and healthy. We recognize it must be difficult for all of you not being able to continue with your normal routines, and for those of you who have family members supported in CLOC's residential group living services, you have not been able to visit with your family member in their home, or yours, for the whole of this pandemic. We know you are missing each other.

I want to provide you with an update about Community Living Oshawa/Clarington and our response to COVID-19. It has been a very busy six weeks at CLOC; we have taken quick and essential steps to address the COVID-19 pandemic, with it being forefront in every action and decision that is made for the agency. Our precautions have been implemented based on the changing direction and evolving safeguards being put in place by our government and health authorities. It has been necessary for us to respond and adjust as the pandemic has unfolded. The purpose of this communication is to update you on our work, and share some key new information regarding the continuation of these measures.

This has been a very challenging time for CLOC, as well. We have unfortunately had seven people (five people supported and two staff) test positive for COVID-19 within one of our residential locations. We are grateful that everyone is at various stages of recovery. We want to acknowledge the support team, who has risen to the challenge and led by example, keeping everyone safe and well cared for. It has been hard work and long hours, and their commitment and dedication are exceptional. The families of the people supported have been a source of unwavering support and kindness, lending strength and support to all. We thank everyone for their support during this very difficult and stressful time. Our hearts and healing thoughts are with the people receiving support, family members and the employees at this location. We are in this together and really could not do it with all your efforts and support.

CLOC cares about the health and safety of the people we serve, families, friends, and our very essential employees. At the beginning of this pandemic, as per the government's directives, CLOC suspended all non-essential services and focused on keeping people within our residential programs safe from COVID-19. We continue to reach out to the people we serve, their families and our amazing employees to see what they need. All meetings are being done via the internet or telephone. We are trying to be creative in keeping people busy, using technology, internet, and recreational activities to keep days filled and meaningful. CLOC's administration office is open with a diminished number of people working onsite. We are not able to have visitors in order to follow government direction on social distancing.

I want to assure you that CLOC continues to follow all recommended measures coming in from health authorities, and we rely on our employees to follow these measures within their locations. We encourage you to follow precautions in your own lives in order to reduce risks to yourself, your families and the community, in an effort to flatten the curve. Stay home unless absolutely necessary, perform frequent hand washing, practice good respiratory hygiene, avoid touching your face unless your hands are clean, and frequently clean and disinfect surfaces, especially those that are high touch areas.

What CLOC Is Doing in Response to COVID-19

Pandemic Plan:

CLOC's Pandemic team meets on a regular basis, in order to keep informed of updates and changes coming from within the organization, the government, health officials and partners. This team establishes pandemic communication channels, procurement of personal protective equipment (PPE), and develops safety protocols, training and tools. It also maintains contact and monitoring systems, liaises with the local health authorities and government, and oversees CLOC's business and continuity planning. We continue to keep CLOC employees informed via pandemic communiques and bulletins. Instructions, tools, training and communication is available to employees via CLOC's training portal and the staff intranet site. CLOC's website has been updated to include COVID-19 updates and resources. CLOC's employees have been offered a COVID-19 Hotline to call in with questions and an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) option for qualifying staff.

Screening and reporting:

CLOC has a screening and reporting process in place for both employees and people receiving supports. If a symptom of illness or a confirmed case of COVID-19 occurs within one of CLOC's group living locations, CLOC will ensure that family members are notified immediately. As part of regular screening, staff are taking their temperatures twice a day, and the temperature of people supported every six hours, in order to monitor and respond quickly to symptoms.

Mask Containment:

People supported in group living have been sheltering in place for over a month. While CLOC has put employee screening in place, there remains the risk that COVID-19 can be spread by people who are asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic. As an additional safety measure, prior to requirement by Public Health, CLOC proactively issued cloth masks to all employees on April 8th, and then surgical/procedural masks on April 17th, to be worn during shift. Masks were also made available to people receiving support in group living, should they be able to wear them, as an added protection.

Other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

PPE continues to be a valuable resource that needs to be managed, and used wisely and properly. Shields and gowns are only required when there are symptoms of COVID-19, or someone has tested positive. In this event, a personal protective equipment kit is issued. CLOC will take direction from health authorities on the appropriate requirements and use of PPE and infection control measures.

Other safety precautions:

In addition to the regular group living cleaning schedule, sanitization occurs minimally three times per shift, with frequent disinfecting of commonly touched surfaces. CLOC is in the process of securing a fogger machine, along with a supply of VitalOxide, an EPA registered hospital disinfectant. The product is sprayed/fogged into a room covering all hard and soft surfaces and allowed to dry/evaporate. It is completely non-toxic and non-irritating (chlorine dioxide), and can be disbursed while people are in the room. This machine will be used to disinfect CLOC's group living, day program and office locations. The sound of the machine and the action/visual of the fogging may be uncomfortable for some people, so it will be scheduled in a manner that creates as little discomfort as possible. These plans will be developed on a case-by-case basis.

All group living locations have doors locked and no visitor signage posted. Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette signs are posted and directions provided to all employees. We are following the protocols set out by public health and keeping everyone at home and limiting contact that isn't essential.

Those people who are served by CLOC outside of group living have received guidance from their support worker on how to minimize their risk by using proper handwashing techniques, cleaning their homes frequently, with more focus on high touch surfaces and staying home to promote social distancing.

Rapid Response Team:

CLOC has assembled a **Rapid Response Team (RRT)**, comprised of members of the Joint Health and Safety Committee (management and direct support) and CLOC's Quality Assurance Lead in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. This team provides employees with immediate support if there are symptoms of illness or positive cases of COVID-19. This includes access and training in the use of PPE's, instructions regarding safety precautions, site isolation plans, and working with and reporting to Durham Public Health.

Eliminating Crossover:

As part of our infection control efforts, it is important for CLOC to temporarily eliminate all employee crossovers by adapting schedules and shifts to wherever possible, ensure that staff are dedicated to a single location. We need to do everything possible to limit the spread of COVID-19, and this is an important step in the process. For the duration of the pandemic, CLOC employees will no longer be

able to work as direct support at multiple employers, in an effort to reduce risk and keep everyone safe.

COVID-19 Updates:

Updates and new information about the COVID-19 virus are issued twice daily by the **Province of Ontario's 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)** [dedicated web page](#) at 10:30 am and 5:30 pm EST to keep citizens up-to-date on developments.

Please refer to the attached flyer for information about how to join CLOC's Zoom Family Town Hall meeting, being held on Monday May 11th at 1:30pm.

Any questions regarding COVID-19 and CLOC's practices surrounding COVID-19 should be addressed to Janice Dewland, Director - Operations at 905-576-3011 x398 or jdewland@communitylivingoc.ca .

We appreciate the understanding and patience that you have with the preventative measures that CLOC has put into place. This time is not easy for any of us, but with your help, we feel we can continue to limit exposure to the virus.

I am thankful to CLOC's wonderful families and friends who are standing behind us, supporting us, lending their strength, assistance and cheering us on during these unprecedented times. Thank you so much for your ongoing commitment. I also would like to take this opportunity to thank CLOC's employees for the important role they are playing, by serving the needs of people who have developmental disabilities, during one of the most difficult times we have faced as a sector and as a society. I am proud of the dedication, commitment and sacrifice of CLOC's team, and am humbled and inspired to be part of it.

With good health,



Terri Gray
Executive Director



FAMILY TOWN HALL ZOOM MEETING

Monday May 11th, 1:30pm - 2:30pm

ZOOM IN with a panel from CLOC who will answer your questions about what CLOC is doing to combat COVID-19. The panel will include:

Terri Gray, Executive Director

JC Legault, President - Board of Directors

Mac Moreau, 1st Vice President - Board of Directors

Marwah Younis, Seamless Care Pharmacy

This session can accommodate 100 people & will be recorded and distributed to those who are unable to attend.

**Please submit your questions prior to the meeting (by May 6th) to
wshaw@communitylivingoc.ca**

To join the Town Hall via ZOOM on your electronic device,
please press *CTRL* and click the button below:

CLICK HERE
TO JOIN
CLOC FAMILY TOWN HALL
Monday, May 11 at 1:30 pm

Please note: The ZOOM Town Hall will open 30 minutes prior to the meeting start time.
If you have any questions/concerns, please contact Wendy Shaw at 905-576-3011 x 330 or
wshaw@communitylivingoc.ca

