

DBT Centre of Vancouver, Inc.

COVID-19 Safety Policies and Procedures

General Policies

- As of June 25, 2020, the DBTCV is **not** open to in-person clinical services, and all services must be provided by Telehealth. We will provide updates as the situation changes.
- Any employee wishing to visit the DBTCV to work in an office without seeing clients, must seek and receive prior approval from the director and/or president of the DBTCV.
 - As indicated in another section below, even if approved, all employees, prior to deciding whether to travel to the DBTCV, must complete the following survey (<https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>) and only travel to the DBTCV if the Results/Recommendation page states, “You do not appear to have symptoms of COVID-19.”
- If this survey has any other result, the clinician or client must stay home and follow public health guidelines regarding self-isolation, and they may also wish to call 811 or visit healthlink.bc.ca.
- All employees are expected to remain aware of up to date public health officer guidelines and directives. Updates can be found here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>
- All employees are required to review Worksafe B.C. guidelines for healthcare professionals (<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation/health-professionals>) and in-person counselling (<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation/in-person-counselling>).
- If any employee is concerned about coronavirus risk, guidelines, directives or procedures, they must contact Dr. Wagner or Chapman as soon as possible to discuss these concerns.

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- Relevant updates regarding public health guidelines will be discussed during weekly DBTCV team meetings on Monday mornings. The note taker for the team must document these discussions.
- Remain aware of issues pertaining to reporting or managing an exposure to COVID-19. Guidance can be found here: <https://www.worksafefbc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/health-and-safety/what-workers-should-do>
- Once finalized, this set of policies and procedures must be made available to all employees and any clients who may wish to receive in-person services.
- Appropriate signage regarding hygiene practices and policies, occupancy limits, and physical distancing, will be posted in visible locations around the DBTCV.

Hygiene, Cleaning, and Disinfection

- Upon entry to the DBTCV and before or immediately after departure, all employees and clients must wash their hands for at least 20 seconds or use hand-sanitizer when hand washing is not possible.
- We will provide in each clinician's office personal-size hand sanitizer meeting Health Canada regulations so that all employees and clients have regular and easy access.
 - Clients may request to use hand sanitizer at any time.
- Hand sanitizer will also be located in the waiting room.
- All common areas will be sanitized at least three times daily - between 8-10am and between 3-5pm.
 - Sanitizing practices will include the use of appropriate wipes and/or spray cleaner for surfaces that can be wiped (e.g., arms of chairs, table/desktops, keyboards and computer accessories, phones, end/side tables, and so forth).
 - Common areas and items include the following:
 - Internal and external doorknobs of the entry to the DBTCV waiting room as well as all offices, including the boardroom.
 - The top of the front desk of the office manager
 - Seating in the waiting room
 - Bathroom keys

- Any tables/end tables in the waiting room
- Kitchen surfaces, including counters, cupboard doors, refrigerator and freezer door, sink and sink handle, water container, coffee maker, and water dispenser.
- The boardroom doors, all of the chairs, the boardroom table, the boardroom cabinet, and applicable cords and devices are also to be cleaned regularly. The use of the boardroom will be monitored, and if it has been used on a particular day, it will be cleaned and sanitized following each use.
- The building management is responsible for sanitizing restrooms on the 10th floor, but we may periodically wipe the restroom doorknobs to increase safety.
- All employees must practice appropriate and safe handling and effective application of cleaning products as per instructions on the cleaning products and the B.C. Centre for Disease Control guidelines (http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/CleaningDisinfecting_PublicSettings.pdf).

Reception and Waiting Area

- The reception area and waiting room are small, so physical distancing measures must be employed consistently.
 - There must be no more than 2 persons in the waiting room at any given time. Clinicians must greet clients from the hallway area and avoid entering the waiting room if more than one individual is in the waiting room.
 - If clients are awaiting appointments, only 2 clients are permitted in the waiting room at a time, and these clients must sit at opposite sides of the waiting room, maintaining at least 2 metres distance.
 - If two clients already are in the waiting room, additional clients must be instructed wait in the elevator foyer, maintaining appropriate physical distance, and they will be informed (e.g., via text, phone call, or in person) when they are permitted to enter the clinic. They may also wait for their appointment in the building lobby or outside. All persons involved are responsible for ensuring appropriate physical distance.
- Visible tape will mark appropriate physical distance in the waiting room between seats and around the reception desk.
- A plexiglass shield will be installed around the reception desk.

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- No common or shared materials must be in the waiting room. These include magazines, toys, candy, food, and so forth. Additionally, clients are not permitted to leave any personal items (including umbrellas) in the waiting room.
- Food and beverage practices will be restricted.
 - Clients will not be offered beverages or food.
 - Clients are encouraged to bring their own water bottles or hot beverage containers should they wish to consume beverages during their visit.
 - Clients will not be permitted to use the kitchen to obtain water, other beverages, or food, as this poses an unnecessary risk and would require an unrealistic degree of monitoring and sanitization of the kitchen.
 - Clients are not permitted to bring food to appointments, as food consumption complicates our ability to ensure safety and cleanliness.
- A sign will be posted at the front entrance instructing all clients and employees to refrain from entering the DBTCV, if they have been experiencing any symptoms associated with COVID-19, have been advised to self-isolate, or have traveled outside of Canada within the last 14 days.
 - The **most common** symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, dry cough, and tiredness. **Less common** symptoms include aches and pains, sore throat, diarrhea, conjunctivitis, headache, loss of taste or smell, a rash on the skin or discoloration of fingers or toes. **Serious symptoms** include difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, chest pain or pressure, or loss of speech or movement.
 - As many of these symptoms may overlap with those of other conditions, such as seasonal allergies, it is not appropriate to leave
 - it up to the discretion of the clinician or client to decide whether to attend in person.
 - All clients and employees, prior to deciding whether to travel to the DBTCV, must complete the following survey (<https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>) and only travel to the DBTCV if the Results/Recommendation page states, "You do not appear to have symptoms of COVID-19."
- If this survey has any other result, the clinician or client must stay home and follow public health guidelines regarding self-isolation, and they may also wish to call 811 or visit healthlink.bc.ca.

- Clients or employees exhibiting any of the above symptoms will be asked to leave the DBTCV immediately.
- Sanitization will be conducted immediately.
- Applicable sessions may then be provided using tele-health service, when appropriate.
- Clients or employees responding affirmatively to queries about or exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms in the office must not return for at least 14 days or until providing written permission from a physician.
 - For clients, Telehealth services will be provided during this 14-day period.
 - Employees must remain at home and if healthy enough to do so, will provide Telehealth services to their clients during the 14-day period.

- Clinician Offices

- While building management is responsible for the daily cleaning and maintenance of clinician's offices, clinicians are responsible for ensuring the cleanliness of their offices throughout the day when using them.
- Clinicians are expected to keep their offices well-organized.
 - Clinicians should put away all materials that might contribute to the transmission of viruses (e.g. loose papers, markers, staplers, mindfulness bells) that clients or others might otherwise be able to easily access and touch.
- Clinicians are expected to sanitize all applicable spaces in their office between sessions and at the end of the day.
 - Clinicians should wipe down all doorknobs, seats, side tables, Kleenex boxes, and other applicable materials between each contact with clients or other persons.
- Others should not generally enter other clinicians' offices or use their materials (e.g. pens, computers, books) without the clinician's permission or that of the president, director, or office manager. Exchange of Materials and Payment
- Clients must pay for sessions electronically and must be provided a range of options for doing so as long as these options are cost-effective and approved by the DBTCV management (e.g., electronic bank transfer, wire transfer, having a credit card or other payment method on file to be charged, PayPal, etc.).

- Client will receive electronic receipts for their services.
- Clients, staff, and clinicians must avoid (if at all possible) the exchange of paper material, such as handouts, binders, booklets, papers, cups, plates, and so forth. We realize this limits some of the interventions or strategies used with certain clients, and we encourage clinicians to be creative in how they might share materials without having to touch and hand them to or receive them from clients, as long as the methods they use are secure and acceptable to the client.
- When it is impossible to avoid exchanging materials with clients or other clinicians at the centre, all individuals involved will wear gloves.

Appropriate Physical Etiquette

- Employees and clients must maintain, whenever possible, at least 2 metres distance from any other person.
 - An exception to this is when family members who live together attend services together. Such family members may sit together and engage in physical contact but must maintain 2 metres distance from others.
- Employees and clients must practice appropriate respiratory etiquette, including coughing or sneezing into the crook of the arm or a tissue, facing away from others, and so forth. See the following link for guidance: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/posters/help-prevent-spread-covid-19-cover-coughs-sneezes?lang=en>.
- In the event that coughing or sneezing has likely come in contact with a surface, the employee is responsible for sanitizing that surface.
- Physical greetings, such as handshakes and any other physical contact between employees or clients are prohibited.

Occupancy Limits

- As mentioned earlier, the occupancy limit for the waiting room is 2 (except more if family members are seated together).
- The occupancy limit for all individual clinician offices is 2, and those 2 individuals should arrange seating to provide optimal space between persons (at least 2 meters whenever possible).
- The occupancy limit for the boardroom is 4.

- All meetings with more than 2 individuals must occur in the boardroom.
 - Please contact the office manager to reserve space in the boardroom.
- Until public health guidelines for B.C. change, groups and consultation team meetings are prohibited at the DBTCV for the time being and must be conducted via Telehealth methods, as such groups and meetings would exceed likely current public health recommendations.

Scheduling Appointments and Communicating with Clients

- In-person appointment times must be staggered to avoid exceeding the occupancy limits for the DBT Centre.
 - The office manager will stagger appointments when she schedules intake or other appointments.
 - Clinicians must stagger appointments.
 - Clinicians may need to consult the DBTCV calendar or the office manager to ensure that scheduled appointments are appropriately staggered.
 - Clinicians should consider separating appointments by at least a 15-minute buffer time to avoid an unacceptable number of clients coming and leaving at the same time.
 - Clinicians seeing clients in person should stick closely to session time limits (e.g., 50 or 60 minutes for individual sessions) to ensure appropriate staggering and time for appropriate sanitization of office between sessions.
- A maximum of three clinicians may see clients on-site at any given time. This will help maintain < 40% of possible physical capacity in the DBTCV at any time.
- When appointments are made, the clinician or office manager must ask clients to consider:
 - Rescheduling if they become sick, are placed on self-isolation, or have travelled out of the country within the last 14 days.
 - Attending appointments alone when possible.
 - Arriving no earlier than 5 minutes prior to their session to reduce the chances of waiting room crowding.

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- Clinicians and the office manager will continue to provide clients with forms and materials electronically through secure methods.
- All clients will be required to come to the DBT Centre with protective masks and gloves to be used as needed.
 - We urge clients to ensure they engage in appropriate maintenance of any masks or other PPE, following public health and B.C. Centre for Disease Control guidelines.

Provision of Services and End of Day Procedures

- Conduct appointments via Telehealth whenever possible.
- Follow the procedures above, inquire about symptoms before starting sessions (see Reception and Waiting Area), and reschedule appointments when necessary.
- Follow procedures above (Physical Etiquette, Occupancy Limits), and avoid sharing materials physically, maintain 2 metres distance in offices, and observe the occupancy limits around individual offices and the boardroom.
- In-person appointments must be conducted with appropriate PPE for both the clinician and the client.
 - Clinicians and clients must use protective masks during sessions.
 - These materials will be provided to clinicians, and if clients do not have such materials, they will be provided.
 - All employees and clients must follow appropriate procedures regarding the use of PPE. These procedures can be found at the following website: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care/infection-control/personal-protective-equipment>
- After seeing each client, all clinicians should clean and sanitize their hands following the hygiene policies above.
- At the end of the work day, clinicians should consider:
 - Changing into a separate set of street cloths and footwear before leaving work.
 - Placing work clothing in a bag and laundering such clothing after arriving home.
 - Showering or bathing immediately after arriving home.

- Being careful to observe hygiene practices and using appropriate precautions with individuals in your home.

Additional Information

- <https://collegeofpsychologists.bc.ca/docs/CPBC%20Guidance%20for%20Registrants.pdf>
- Personal Protective Equipment <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care/infection-control/personal-protective-equipment>
- Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Community-Based Allied Health Care Providers in Clinic Settings http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID19_IPCGuidelinesCommunityBasedAlliedHCPsClinicSettings.pdf
- Health Professionals: Protocols for Returning to Operation <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation/health-professionals>
- In-person Counselling: Protocols for Returning to Operation <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation/in-person-counselling>