

From: Brad Saunders, CEO
Date: September 4, 2020
Re: Update on COVID-19 Measures at CLTO

Over the past few months, Community Living Toronto (CLTO) has taken rapid and necessary steps to address the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of these changes came about as a result of information that has been updated or amended as we have adapted to the crisis. We have extended these measures a number of times since March.

The progress we have made so far both as a province and as an organization is very impressive. Case numbers and testing capacity show that our efforts are working. Despite our success to date, news reports confirm that the fight is far from over. This is especially true in congregate living settings, such as group homes and long-term care facilities. So far, we have managed to keep COVID-19 out of most of our sites. The measures we put in place and the hard work of our staff have produced this result.

As the pandemic evolves, it has become apparent that we cannot safely reopen our supports and services as we knew them all at once. Since our last update, we have begun to gradually reopen some of the services that were closed in March. While some services have reopened, others will remain closed until October 12, 2020 under provincial emergency orders and in accordance with public health guidelines. This update outlines the status of the services we have begun to reopen and those services which will remain closed until October 12.

Group Homes

We have focused our efforts on keeping the people we support and our staff safe from COVID-19. Active screening measures are in place in all our sites and staff have been required to limit their employment in the vulnerable person sector to CLTO. Our staff are trained and continuously supported in infection control, cleaning, and disinfection protocols. Individuals living in CLTO residential programs have been receiving meaningful virtual and in-person day supports in their homes.

Thanks to our success, we are now able to offer outdoor visits, indoor visits, outings, and essential overnight absences at CLTO sites. Families are invited to reach-out to schedule these opportunities. Please give CLTO staff as much notice as possible to ensure proper staffing and safety procedures in advance of your scheduled visit. These measures remain in effect until October 12, 2020. We will update these restrictions prior to October 12 if permitted to do so by the provincial government.

Day Programs

We remain unable to reopen large-scale congregate day programs due to provincial and local public health restrictions. Fortunately, we will shortly pilot small-scale Community Participation Supports

(day programs) in three sites across the city. Up to 30 participants will be invited to join small cohorts and enjoy a new program model that is both more individualized in nature and safer from a public health perspective. This program was designed in accordance with guidelines from the provincial government and public health restrictions. Active screening, physical distancing, and proper hand hygiene will be critical to successful implementation of this model.

The pilot team will prepare for the launch during the week of September 8, 2020 and we will welcome participants starting on September 14, 2020. Participants are being selected from those who do not receive residential support from CLTO and are unable to access virtual day supports. They have already been contacted to begin preparation for this new initiative. We are starting small now while working toward extending our Community Participation Supports through providing a range of options for those who had been involved in our day programs prior to the pandemic.

Passport

Our Passport staff have been supporting individuals throughout the pandemic through virtual supports and access to technology. We have resumed intake for community supports funded by the Passport program. We have also resumed Passport-funded activities for people living in the community.

Virtual Offerings

We continue to offer virtual day supports as part of our menu of options at CLTO. These programs are offered via Zoom from 10AM to 3PM every day by trained CLTO facilitators. Activities include exercise classes, karaoke, and movie screenings. We also host fun activities on Facebook Live from our Community Living Toronto page. Highlights include stretching sessions with Batman and Wonder Woman, cooking classes, and movie of the week recommendations. Beyond these measures, we are ensuring that all our group homes have the technology they need to keep the people we support happy and connected to their families and friends. Please contact your supervisor to arrange phone calls, Facetime chats, or other virtual connections with your family member.

Respite

We will open after-school respite programs at three locations later this month for a small number of participants. This program will operate at significantly reduced capacity due to public health restrictions. Impacted families will hear from CLTO shortly about how to access this smaller-scale program. All participants in after-school respite programs will be subject to active screening requirements and appropriate guidelines regarding physical distancing, hand hygiene, and other public health measures.

Overnight respite programs remain closed across CLTO until October 12, 2020. This includes programs at Lawson, McMillan, TREADD, and Ennerdale. We will reopen these programs at reduced capacity before October 12 if possible under provincial guidelines and Public Health restrictions.

CLTO Offices

CLTO has taken steps to significantly limit the number of people entering our administrative offices across the city, including our Head Office at 20 Spadina and all regional offices. Only essential staff are permitted entry to our offices, and anyone entering must wear a mask and be actively screened

before proceeding into the building. All in-person training remains suspended across the Association and required and mandatory training is being provided online. These measures will remain in effect until October 12, 2020.

Individualized Supports, LIGHTS, APSW, Family Supports, Home Management, and Supported Independent Living

Many individuals supported or affiliated with CLTO live independently in the community with some or infrequent services from CLTO. We continue to reach out and support new and existing families with children and adults living at home remotely or through safe drop-offs of necessary items. We have recommended that people living independently take measures to limit the number of visitors entering their homes and that they practice physical distancing as much as possible. We have provided PPE to households or visiting staff where physical distancing is not possible.

Events Across CLTO

On the advice of Public Health authorities and in compliance with City of Toronto restrictions on gatherings and permitted events, we have cancelled all scheduled in-person events across the organization. Our flagship event, Community Rocks, has been postponed from November 2020 to November 2021. We look forward to hosting our first virtual Annual General Meeting via Zoom on September 22, 2020.

Employment Supports

As much as possible, our employment supports continue to match individuals seeking work. We also continue to support individuals who are working in a CLTO-facilitated placement.

Shadow Lake

After a very successful summer of virtual camp and Facebook Live events, we look forward to offering some in-person trial sessions at Shadow Lake in September. We are also offering respite weekends at Shadow Lake in October. Weekends will run from Friday afternoon to Sunday afternoon and will cost \$600 per guest. All activities will be conducted in accordance with provincial and public health guidelines, including active screening, physical distancing, and proper hand hygiene. Applications will open soon on MyCommunityHub.ca. More details will be available on Shadow Lake social media pages.

We must remain vigilant and cautious as our province continues to reopen. The safety of the people we support and our staff remains our top priority. We expect that many of the government-ordered restrictions on the size and design of our services will continue as many regions and sectors across the province reopen and relax restrictions.

While we cannot say exactly what will happen next, we know that reopening our services as we knew them is not an option. This is an opportunity to redesign our services in a way that furthers our core mission of supporting the rights and choices of the community we support through smaller, more individualized program offerings.

We will update you frequently over the coming weeks. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

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