

Hello MEMBER,

Please find a message from the President, more Q&As and information from the government. We hope this will help. The Q&As will be added to the current ones that are on our website. They can be found at <http://cocoo.on.ca/covid-19-faqs/>. Moving forward updates will continue to be posted on the website - remember to check regularly. Please see the **attached message** from the President of the College.

Q: I am self-isolated due to COVID-19 following advice given by the Ontario and Federal Government What are my professional responsibilities?

A: The College understands that this was a difficult decision to make, but if you meet the criteria for self-isolation set out by Public Health, the hospital system and the Ministry of Health, this is the right decision to make. Given the fact that you are unavailable to your patients, take reasonable steps to help make coverage arrangements for their ongoing care needs, where you can, (recognizing the stresses on the system) and help patients navigate the system and find the right care for them.

To the extent that you can, take advantage of virtual care options to provide care remotely even while in self-isolation where it would be appropriate in the circumstances to do so.

Q: I am a practitioner in a private community based office and have run out of PPE and therefore have effectively closed my office. What are my responsibilities to my patients who may need emergency assistance?

A: *First:* try implementing virtual care to provide that care directly and ensure they get the care they need.

Second: try coordinating with colleagues to provide coverage. This may include colleagues whose scope of practice is different than yours, but who are able to provide assistance.

Third: while pharmacists are also currently experiencing the pressure of delivering care during the pandemic, they may be able to assist in some instances, like extending or renewing prescriptions.

Finally: avoid as much as possible simply redirecting patients to the Emergency Department of your local hospital. Hospitals are also being overwhelmed and finding means for providing care in the community as much as possible helps the entire system respond to this public health emergency. Instead, do your best to help patients navigate the system to find the care they need while you're unavailable to them.

Q: Can you give me a brief refresher on privacy issues regarding email and Skype or FaceTime conferencing with our patients? I've heard of some communicating with their patients in this manner and just want to make sure I am compliant and secure.

A: The College has taken legal advice but much of what you have asked is not legal in nature.

- Legally/professionally members must ensure that all communications involving personal health information is confidential and limited to the patient and those with whom the patient has consented to share the information. If the means of communication is done over a secure internet connection and the software uses encrypted connections, the communication should be private. It is our understanding that FaceTime and Skype are encrypted and therefore

should be private. We would suggest that emails not be used for communications involving personal health information as they are not private and there is no way to absolutely ensure that the information is only seen by the intended recipient.

SUGGESTED SIGNAGE FOR MEMBERS

The Chief Medical Office of Health of Ontario has directed ALL Regulated Health Professionals that ALL non-essential and elective services should be ceased or reduced to minimal levels, subject to allowable exceptions, until further notice.

We want to assure patients who attend our office during this period that we are maintaining appropriate infection prevention and control procedures according to Public Health Ontario protocols. We are also strongly advising our staff to follow the directions of the Government of Ontario regarding how to minimize the spread of the virus. It must be understood, however, that these are unprecedented times and despite screening all of our patients before they attend the office, it is impossible to give any assurances that the persons who do attend have not been exposed to the virus which could potentially put others at risk.

Of Important Note from the Ministry

The Ministry is looking for **additional experienced health care providers** to help provincial efforts to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19.

Specifically, they are looking for health care providers who may be working part-time and want to help and are prepared to increase their work hours or former healthcare providers who are retired, or on inactive status with their regulatory college; and are prepared to return to employment. The government is looking for health care providers (including those registered with health regulatory Colleges) who may be working part-time and are prepared to increase their work hours, or former healthcare providers who are retired, or on inactive status with their regulatory college and are prepared to return to employment.

For more information please visit the following sites:

In English: <http://www.healthforceontario.ca/en/M4/COVID19>

In French: <http://www.healthforceontario.ca/fr/M4/COVID19>

For your information A link can also be found in the following locations on the Ministry Website

Link on the [Ontario.ca/coronavirus](https://www.ontario.ca/coronavirus)

EN : <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus#section-12>

FR : <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus#section-12>

And on the COVID-19 page for providers on [health.gov.on.ca](https://www.health.gov.on.ca)

EN : http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/2019_guidance.aspx

FR : http://www.health.gov.on.ca/fr/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/2019_guidance.aspx

Thank you,

Felecia Smith, LL.B

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COLLEGE OF CHIROPODISTS OF ONTARIO

Regulating Chiropodists and Podiatrists in Ontario

March 23, 2020

Message from the President:

Well, what a year this week has been!

I hope that you and your family are safe, healthy and fairing as well as can be expected under current circumstances.

As many of you know, on Sunday, March 15th, 2020 the College took the careful step of advising Members to provide ONLY essential emergency care to patients. The College carefully considered all available information/options before issuing its recommendation to the profession. Sometimes, the hardest decision is also the right one.

While the College is undoubtedly concerned about the health and welfare of its members, the actions taken were motivated purely by the need to do everything possible to stop the spread of COVID-19 within the general population. The Colleges' decision was further reinforced Friday, March 20th, 2020 when *Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health* issued a Directive to ALL Regulated Health Professionals to follow suit.

COMMUNICATION and **TEAMWORK** are vital at this time. The more paths that can be used to facilitate this situation the better. Therefore, COCOO will be guided using the core principles of *communication, proactivity, availability, helpfulness, clearness, and truthfulness*.

The Executive is meeting daily to ensure timely analysis of developments and decision making. The College has also created both a Facebook and Twitter account. These platforms will complement our email communication and website. This online presence will allow the College to correspond more promptly as website and email communiqué takes much longer to distribute. The College has finite resources that are operating beyond capacity only through the tireless dedication of Executive, Registrar, and staff. I would ask for members' continued patience as we endeavor to respond to inquiries as quickly as possible. Members should check the FAQs available already to see if a question has already been posted. The College will pass on all relevant information to members as soon as it becomes available. Please only use REPUTABLE sources to gather information and be sure to be precise when distributing the information. A small seemingly inconsequential post can cause a large amount of confusion.

COCOO has been in constant discussion with the Associations and will continue to keep channels open to help Members navigate this unparalleled situation. Associations are the

source for members to seek guidance on many issues including the impact of the current pandemic on your small business.

The College has requested the Associations to collaboratively develop a database for Members to use as a referral resource. It is hoped that Members who have chosen to remain open to provide emergency care, will register and indicate whether they have COVID-positive capable facilities.

On behalf of the College, I would like to truly thank every member who has continued to serve the public, placing civic needs over their own. May you remain safe and in good health. I urge everyone to follow the new social media accounts to stay connected and receive prompt updates as we navigate this time of uncertainty.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Hayles". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'H'.

Martin Hayles, D.Pod.M., B.Sc. (Hons), M.Sc., FFPM RCPS (Glas).
Chiroprapist
President
College of Chiroprapists of Ontario