

April 21, 2020

Aging Services Division
Coronavirus (COVID-19) Frequently Asked Question
Qualified Service Providers (QSPs)

Q1. I am a Qualified Service Provider (QSP), what I can do to protect myself and my clients from the potential transmission of COVID-19 while providing in home services?

The Department of Health advises that QSPs should follow the guidance for health care workers while they are providing care. Upon entering the client's home, PPE should be worn including a surgical mask and gloves. Ensure proper handwashing after direct contact. The client should be encouraged to wear a mask, if available.

Q2: I am a QSP and have been informed that a consumer that I assist is being tested for the COVID-19 virus. This consumer needs daily assistance with essential tasks, and I want to continue to provide care. What precautions can I take to protect myself while they are waiting for the results?

According to the ND Dept of Health, the consumer should be treated as if they have COVID-19 until test results are received. Full personal protective equipment (PPE), should be worn during close contact. This includes gloves, surgical mask with eye/face shield and surgical gown. The PPE should be removed prior to leaving the home and should not be reused. The client should be encouraged to wear a mask, if available, during direct contact. Proper handwashing is also essential to preventing the spread of infection.

Contact the HCBS Case Manager to let them know the client is being tested and to discuss service options.

You are also encouraged to wear a mask if you provide care in other consumers' homes. You should self-monitor for any symptoms, and if you develop any symptoms of Covid-19, contact the ND Health Dept Covid-19 Hotline or your healthcare provider.

Q3: I am a QSP and I have been informed that a consumer I assist is being tested for COVID-19. This consumer receives homemaker services but does not require care to meet their daily needs. Should I continue to assist this individual while they are waiting for the test results?

A provider can always decide if they will provide a service to a consumer.

If the tasks that you are assisting with are not essential to daily living, you may want

to delay providing the service until the test results are known.

If you are assisting with meal preparation, there may be other meal options available for the individual, such as home delivered meals. The HCBS case manager can help the consumer find other options as needed.

If you choose to stop providing services to a consumer during this time, you need to inform the client and the HCBS case manager.

If you choose to provide care, the consumer should be treated as if they have COVID-19 until test results are received. This means that full personal protective equipment (PPE), should be worn during close contact. This includes gloves, surgical mask with eye/face shield and surgical gown. The PPE should be removed prior to leaving the home and should not be reused. The client should be encouraged to wear a mask, if available, during direct contact. Proper handwashing is also essential to preventing the spread of infection.

You are also encouraged to wear a mask if you provide care in other consumers. You should self-monitor for any symptoms, and if you develop any symptoms of Covid-19, contact the ND Health Dept Covid-19 Hotline or your healthcare provider.

Q4: I am a QSP and I am caring for a consumer who has tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. What should I do?

A provider can always decide if they will provide a service to a consumer.

As a person's illness progresses, their needs may change. However, you may be asked to continue to provide essential services to the COVID-19 positive consumer.

Contact the HCBS Case Manager to let them know the client has a confirmed case of COVID-19 and to discuss service options. They will be working with the consumer to modify their person centered care plan as needed. Our goal is to ensure essential daily services continue and align with the consumers medical healthcare needs to the greatest extent possible.

Upon entering the client's home, full PPE should be worn including surgical gown, surgical mask with eye/face shield and gloves. Ensure proper handwashing after direct contact. The client should be encouraged to wear a mask, if available.

The North Dakota Department of Health will be conducting interviews with all persons diagnosed with COVID-19 to determine who their close contacts are. If you were identified as a close contact, you will be notified by the North Dakota Department of Health and will receive instruction on quarantine and monitoring.

Q5. I am a QSP are there any recommendations on how to properly use PPE and how I might make it last longer if I have a limited supply?

The ND Department of Health provides the following guidance for N95 and facemask reuse:

Safety Practices:

- The mask should only be worn and/or reused by a single wearer.
- The masks should not be used when moving between confirmed cases and non-cases.
- The mask should not be removed, adjusted, or touched during patient care activities.
- Care should be taken to prevent touching the inside of the mask.
- Care should be taken during removal of the mask to ensure it is not contaminated.
- Hand hygiene should be performed after removal of the face shield or goggles and before removing the mask.
- Perform hand hygiene after putting the mask on and following removal/placement in a storage location
- The mask should be inspected before each use to ensure its physical integrity is intact.
- For the N95 mask, a seal-check should be performed after each time it is put on.

For more information on how to properly store and use PPE please go to:

[https://www.health.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/Files/MSS/coronavirus/Facemask And N95 Reuse Guide.pdf](https://www.health.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/Files/MSS/coronavirus/Facemask%20And%20N95%20Reuse%20Guide.pdf)

Q6. I am a QSP and because of the COVID-19 emergency I am unable to find PPE. Is there any way to get assistance finding these supplies?

During this COVID-19 crisis, if you are unable to find PPE, the North Dakota Association of Community Providers (NDACP) can help you access PPE.

ALL QSPs, individuals and agencies, are independent contractors responsible to provide their own business supplies, including PPE. However, because of the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 emergency, which may present unique health risks to clients and providers of essential services the North Dakota Department of Human Services is supporting NDACP in making some PPE available to QSPs.

INDIVIDUAL QSPs

NDACP will aggregate your orders and submit them to the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDOH) each business day. If your supplies are unavailable, they will contact you with alternatives. Limited quantities of alternative supplies (surgical masks, gloves) may possibly be available at no cost to you.

AGENCY QSPs

NDACP can aggregate your NDDOH orders with individual QSPs as described above or explain how you may order them directly. If your supplies are unavailable from NDDOH, NDACP will contact you with alternatives. Limited quantities of alternative supplies may be available if you agree to reimburse NDACP for their out-of-pocket expenses.

ALL QSPs

If you have credible information to indicate your client has a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19, contact the HCBS Case Manager to discuss service options and access to recommended PPE.

**If you need assistance with accessing PPE
please contact NDACP at (701) 620-2933.**

If you have additional questions about exposure to COVID-19, or about whether to self-quarantine or take other precautions because of your personal health situation, please call the **Health Department Hotline at 1-866-207-2880** or your personal healthcare provider.

Please go to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html> for the latest information on COVID-19 and ways you can keep yourself and the people you serve as safe as possible while still providing these vital services.

***Disclaimer:** These recommendations are based upon information available as of 4/20/2020. COVID-19 is an emerging disease. New knowledge is added daily, and guidance may change as the situation evolves. Please consult the CDC and North Dakota Department of Health websites regularly for the most up-to-date information. The information contained in this message is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Talk with your healthcare provider about any questions you may have regarding a medical condition. Nothing contained in this document is intended to be used for medical diagnosis or treatment. The information provided by the Department should be treated as a resource only and should not be construed as medical or legal advice.*

AGING & ADULT SERVICES

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