

Update: April 7, 2021

On April 6, 2021, Premier Jason Kenney announced a return to increased public health measures in response to rising daily COVID-19 case numbers, increasing numbers of the virus variants of concern, and growing hospitalizations and ICU admissions. Physiotherapy Alberta has reviewed the updated restrictions and has identified that the changes announced will have limited impact on current physiotherapy service delivery across the many sectors in which physiotherapists provide services.

Physiotherapists are reminded that the requirement that all health services be open by appointment only and be limited to one-on-one services only remain in effect.

Unfortunately, the return to restrictions on indoor group fitness activities does affect the provision of physiotherapy group exercise interventions, such as GLA:D programs, falls and balance classes, or Parkinson's group classes. With the return to Step 1 restrictions, group fitness activities are prohibited, and physiotherapists are unable to offer group exercise classes in person. Physiotherapists who offer these interventions will need to transition to either one-on-one provision of physiotherapy services for affected populations or return to telerehabilitation group classes.

After nearly a year of operating with increased measures in use to prevent the spread of COVID-19, it is easy to become complacent or lax in our efforts, especially if a COVID-19 infection has not directly affected yourself, your family and friends or your physiotherapy practice. While this is an understandable reaction to the COVID-fatigue that physiotherapists are experiencing, we must remain vigilant and diligent in our efforts related to screening, PPE use, cleaning, and disinfecting the practice environment. We encourage physiotherapists, physiotherapy support workers and others in the practice environment to review the [Guidance for Resuming Physiotherapy Practice During a Pandemic](#) and the [Infection Prevention and Control Visual Guide](#) again and to audit their current practices to ensure they are in compliance with all of the measures outlined in these documents.

- We are again calling on physiotherapists to consider the use of telerehabilitation technologies to deliver physiotherapy services to keep COVID-19 out of the practice setting.
- We are reminding physiotherapists that, while not mandatory, use of eye protection is recommended to limit the physiotherapist's risk of exposure to COVID-19.

Finally, during the April 6th press conference, Premier Kenney highlighted the importance of vaccination and ongoing efforts to ramp up vaccination programs. In recent days, Alberta Health has announced expanded vaccine eligibility as vaccine supplies have increased. We encourage all physiotherapists to monitor the Government of Alberta [COVID-19 Vaccine webpage](#) closely and to book a vaccine appointment as soon as they are eligible, whether based

on their age, health status, or status as a regulated health care professional. Additional information regarding vaccination can be found on [Physiotherapy Alberta's website](#).

Credible information regarding vaccines and answers to frequently asked questions regarding vaccine development, both to inform physiotherapists, and for physiotherapists to share with their patients is available through [Alberta Health](#), [Health Canada](#), and [19 To Zero](#).

Physiotherapists may also wish to view this [webinar](#) hosted by the University of Calgary and the 19 To Zero coalition regarding how to talk to people about vaccines for more ideas about how to have informed conversations with people who are vaccine hesitant or COVID skeptical.