Dear Dental Students,

As the COVID-19 pandemic remains a concern and risk in clinical learning, we wanted to provide you with key information as well as update commonly asked questions from students. While the guidelines from public health and our health care partners may and will change, these are the current recommendations. As always, you should consult with Public Health if you have any questions or reach out to Learner Experience.

**Commonly asked questions.**

**If you suspect you have COVID 19.**

If you have symptoms consistent with a presentation of COVID 19 or fail the COVID screen for the health facility or Western, please **STAY HOME**, self-isolate and follow guidelines from Public Health Ontario.

You will need to:
- Notify the Learner Experience Office, Sydney Van Meerbergen (for absence from clinical activities, and Brenda Davis (for absence from any academic activities).
- Arrange to get a COVID test as soon as possible as you may not be able to return to school/clinic without a negative test result. The turn around time for test results at the community assessment centres is normally 24 hours.

**If you are diagnosed with COVID-19 by criteria**

If you are diagnosed with COVID-19 you **MUST STAY HOME**, self-isolate and follow guidelines from Public Health Ontario.

If you are positive, you must:
- Notify the Learner Experience Office, Sydney Van Meerbergen (for absence from clinical activities, and Brenda Davis (for absence from any academic activities).

**I learned that a patient for whom I had provided care has tested COVID positive. What do I need to do?**

During your time in clinic you should always have the appropriate PPE on when interacting with patients. This means if a patient is later diagnosed as being COVID positive you will be notified but **no action** is required. As long you were wearing your PPE and donning and doffing appropriately, you can continue in clinical learning. You will need to self monitor according to public health guidelines and seek care if your screening tool changes to positive.

If you have concerns about the PPE used or a break in your technique, you will need to stay home and get tested.
I learned that a health professional with whom I worked closely with has tested COVID 19 positive. What do I need to do?

During your clinical rotations you should always have the appropriate PPE on when interacting with patients, clinicians, other health professionals and colleagues. This scenario of contact with a masked clinician or colleague who was COVID compliant in technique requires no action besides self screening daily.

If a team or health care worker is later diagnosed as being COVID-19 positive, you will be notified. If you were wearing the appropriate PPE and followed technique, **no action** is required (besides self monitoring) and you can continue to work in clinical learning.

If you have concerns about the PPE used or technique followed, you will need to stay home and get tested.

**What is a “Close Contact”?**

A close contact is an individual with whom you have had a high-risk exposure. This can include individuals living together in the same household while not self-isolating; direct contact with infectious body fluids (cough, sneezed on); close (<2m) or prolonged, unprotected contact.

**What do I do if I have had “Close Contact” with someone who is COVID positive? OR**

I received notification from the COVID Alert app that I was in contact with someone who has tested positive. What do I need to do?

The answer depends on the following:

**Are you fully immunized?**

**NO,** You should self isolate and get tested right away. If your test is negative, it is recommended that you re-test on or after day 7. According to the latest Ontario Guidelines, ([Appendix 11 High Risk Contact Flow Chart](https://gov.on.ca)) you are required to self-isolate for ten days following your last exposure even if you test negative.

**YES,** **If you have any symptoms of COVID** you should self-isolate and get tested right away. If your test is positive you must self-isolate for ten days.

**If you do not have symptoms** you may not be required to self-isolate (determined by individual health units) but you may not pass the clinic screen or the University screen. You will need to self-monitor, follow public health measures (like wearing a mask outside) and get tested if you develop symptoms.
**My housemate has been diagnosed with COVID. What do I need to do?**

*If you have any symptoms of COVID* you should self-isolate and get tested right away. If your test is positive you must self-isolate for ten days.

*If you do not have symptoms* you may not be required to self-isolate (determined by individual health units) but you may not pass the clinic screen or the University screen. You will need to self-monitor, follow public health measures (like wearing a mask outside) and get tested if you develop symptoms.

Your housemate will need to stay in a separate room away from other people and use a separate bathroom if possible. Please email Dr. Northcott ([snorthc2@uwo.ca](mailto:snorthc2@uwo.ca)) in the Learner Experience Office, Sydney Van Meerbergen (for absence from clinical activities, and Brenda Davis (for absence from any academic activities).

You can contact the School for support if this arises (519-661-4234 or learner.experience@schulich.uwo.ca)

**My housemate has symptoms of COVID and is awaiting test results. What do I need to do?**

If you do not have symptoms, you can continue to attend on campus. You will need to self-monitor, follow public health measures (like wearing a mask outside) and get tested if you develop symptoms.

If you develop signs or symptoms of COVID-19 you must **remain at home, self-isolate and follow guidelines from Public Health Ontario.** You will need to be tested for COVID-19. Notify the Learner Experience Office, Sydney Van Meerbergen (for absence from clinical activities, and Brenda Davis (for absence from any academic activities).

**My housemate received notification from the COVID Alert app that they were in contact with someone who has tested COVID positive or Public Heath has notified my housemate that they were identified as a “Close Contact” of someone with COVID. What do I need to do?**

Your housemate will need to be tested for COVID-19. As long as you are asymptomatic, you can continue clinical learning and continue to monitor closely and regularly for COVID symptoms.

**When can I return to academic learning or clinical responsibilities?**
Once you have completed your self-isolation (COVID positive or COVID negative but a close contact of someone COVID positive) as directed by public health, you can return to school. You do not need to notify anyone.

**Where can I get a COVID test as a dental student?**

You may attend one of the community testing centres. Information on the locations and hours of the centres (including Western’s testing centre) can be found here: [https://www.healthunit.com/covid-19-concerns#testing-locations](https://www.healthunit.com/covid-19-concerns#testing-locations)

**Questions?**:

Learner Experience Office learner.experience@schulich.uwo.ca (general queries)

Brenda Davis Brenda.Davis@schulich.uwo.ca (didactic absences)

Sydney Van Meerbergen svanmeer@uwo.ca (clinical absences)

Dr. Sandra Northcott snorthc2@uwo.ca (if COVID positive)

*Updated November 22, 2021*