

Memo



To: Community Support Services Staff

From: Jason Lye, Vice President – Community Support Services

cc: Director of Operations, National Manager, Regional Directors

Date: April 8, 2020

Re: **Use of Non-Medical and Homemade Masks**

On April 6th, the Public Health Agency of Canada revised its guidance on using non-medical masks to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Canadians are advised that they may wear non-medical masks along with maintaining a safe physical distance (2 mtrs) from other people when out at the grocery store or pharmacy.

With this new direction, MODC's internal policy has evolved and will continue to evolve. As of April 8, 2020, front-line staff will be provided one surgical mask per day and, as a result, will not require homemade cloth masks for work purposes. We continue to research the latest information on cloth masks and provide the following information:

- Cloth masks should only be worn by those who are feeling healthy when they cannot maintain the recommended 2 metres from other people. Currently staff will be provided with a surgical mask and so cloth masks are not required.
- Non-medical and homemade cloth masks have not been proven to protect the wearer. They may be helpful in protecting others by containing respiratory droplets and preventing them from contaminating the surrounding area.
- Non-medical or homemade masks may also stop you from touching your nose or mouth, which can help limit the transmission of disease.

In the meantime here are links to resources on PPE:

WHO on PPE

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks>

Public Health Agency of Canada

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html>

March of Dimes Canada Health Portal

<http://www.modchealth.ca/en/health-safety/>

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