



Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority Inc.



March 27, 2020

TO: NITHA Partner Community Mental Health & Addiction Departments

Re: Recommendations amidst COVID-19 Response – Emergent Mental Health Care

In cases where there are emergent needs of a client facing suicidal ideations, psychosis, anxiety and depression, please implement social distancing efforts (two arm's length apart), and complete the suicide assessment with these protective measures being followed only when assessed to be high-risk.

In response to the growing concern surrounding COVID-19, and the implications of Emergent Mental Health Care in the following instances:

- 1) Suicidal Active Client/Patients in Community – deemed medium to high-risk
- 2) Emergent Protective Measures – Hospitalization Intervention Process
- 3) Transportation to Hospital

If you have assessed anyone to fall within medium to high-risk following a suicide risk assessment process; protective measures to follow will be regarded as the following:

- 1) Communication with Client/Patient(s) and Emergency Contact on file
- 2) Communication with Emergency Department with Local Hospital to arrange admit for observation, and further assessment
- 3) Communication with Medical Transportation to transport Client/Patient to Hospital

In the event, the emergency contact is requesting to attend with the Client/Patient to hospital, this is currently not the guideline due to COVID-19 responses to avoid transmission. Emergency Health is only accepting Client/Patients, with no additional persons being allowed into Hospital settings.

It is with understanding that families may not want their family member to go alone during such a precarious situation, although during this time, we can advise that it is in the best interest of the Client/Patient to access the Emergent Mental Health Care as part of continuity of care guidelines.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Mental Health & Addiction Advisor.

Sincerely,

Glenda Watson BHSc., M.Ed. (Psych), CCC
Mental Health & Addiction Advisor