October 20, 2020

Re: Request for Compassionate Exemption – Section 10 - Orders 05-2020 and 28-2020 – Urgent End of Life or Critical Injury or Illness Visitation

The Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH), pursuant to her authority under s. 29(2.1) of the Public Health Act, made CMOH Orders 05-2020 amended by Order 28-2020 (the Order) identifying steps to prohibit persons from attending any location for any time period and subject to any conditions, any activity that could transmit an infectious agent as well as any other steps to lessen the impact to public health.

Pursuant to Section 10 of the Order the CMOH may, notwithstanding anything else in the Order, exempt in writing persons or classes of persons from the Order on whatever terms are appropriate.

The CMOH on her own authority under the Order has determined that it is desirable that the individuals identified below who have entered Canada within the previous 14 days and would otherwise be required to Quarantine or individuals who are required to Quarantine due to being close contacts of a confirmed case of COVID-19 who are required to travel between the locations and facilities identified may be considered as being exempt from the Order. Those persons that may be considered exempt are those that travel to or from:

a) An acute care hospital as defined by the Hospital Act in Alberta, Canada to visit a patient or client who is receiving critical care for a life-threatening illness or who is at imminent end of life; OR

b) A “health care facility” in Alberta, Canada as defined by Record of Decision CMOH Order 29-2020 Section 1(10) for end of life visitation as defined by Record of Decision CMOH Order 29-2020; OR

c) Any other setting in Alberta, Canada where services are being provided by employees, contractors or subcontractors of either AHS, Covenant Health or “health care facility” for end of life visitation as defined by Record of Decision CMOH Order 29-2020.

Alberta Health Services (AHS) to ensure a safe visitation has developed a Safe Visitation Site Approval Checklist to ensure a visitation plan and appropriate safety approvals are in place to facilitate visitation of individuals under Quarantine. These protocols are required to be used by acute care hospitals, “health care facilities”, and other settings where health system employees, contractors and subcontractors enter to
provide care. The Safe Visitation Site Approval Checklist must be completed prior to approving the visitation of individuals required to Quarantine as set out in Section 3 of the Order.

In accordance with the above and pursuant to Section 10 of the Order, I am satisfied that a limited exemption be granted from the requirements set out in Section 3 of Order 05-2020 as amended by Order 28-2020 for the following persons upon the following conditions:

I. Individuals in Quarantine who are designated by an administrator of an acute care hospital, “health care facility”, or homeowner/proprietor where health system employees attend by completing the required Safe Visitation Site Approval Checklist as required by the Province of Alberta, and the Site Visit Authorization Limited Release from Federal Quarantine as required by the Government of Canada, to be permitted a limited exemption from Section 3 requirements as to Quarantine subject to the conditions in paragraph II to VIII for the purposes of being present during the final moments of life for a loved one or to support someone who is critically ill;

II. The persons identified in paragraph I must also sign and agree to follow all conditions set by AHS, Covenant Health, or a “health care facility” and the requirements listed in Schedule A, which may be updated from time to time, for the purposes of entering and attending an acute care hospital, “health care facility”, or other settings where health system employees, contractors and subcontractors enter to provide care;

III. That persons described in paragraph I shall Quarantine except when they are travelling to and from the specified: acute care hospital; “health care facility” or other settings where health system employees, contractors and subcontractors enter to provide care; as listed on their Site Visit Authorization form as required by the Government of Canada;

IV. The persons described in paragraph I shall travel in private vehicles of which they are the only passenger or, if they are not the only passenger, where possible, be continuously wearing a mask and distanced as much as possible from any other persons in that private vehicle;

V. That the persons described in paragraph I as subject to Quarantine must assess their health and if the individual becomes aware that they are a confirmed case of COVID-19 or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms as per paragraph VI that person must enter into isolation as per Section 6 of Order 05-2020;

VI. COVID-19 symptoms that would result in isolation under Section 6 of the Order include a cough, fever, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, runny
nose, or sore throat that is not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition;

VII. The persons described in paragraph 1 must follow personal protective equipment (PPE) guidelines of public health officials and must wear a mask at all times when outside of their Quarantine accommodation; and

VIII. The persons described in paragraph 1 must submit to a health screening upon arrival and follow any other recommended infection prevention and control precautions of the acute care hospital, “health care facility”, or other setting where health system employees, contractors and subcontractors enter to provide care, including but not limited to the requirement to wear a mask within these specified settings.

Although the persons described in paragraph 1 are provided a limited exemption from Quarantine if the terms in Schedule A are satisfied per Section 10 of Order 05-2020 as amended by Order 28-2020, those persons shall continue to engage in appropriate hygiene, maintain a minimum of 2 metres distancing from every other person, and other measures identified by public health authorities to protect this person and other Albertans from further transmission of COVID-19.

The exemption may be terminated or modified by the CMOH in writing without notice and for any reason as determined by the CMOH.

This exemption comes into effect on October 20, 2020.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Deena Hinshaw, BSc, MD, MPH, CCFP, FRCP
Chief Medical Officer of Health

Enclosure
Schedule A

Individuals who are required to Quarantine under Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) Orders 05-2020 and 28-2020 (the Order) may request permission to leave their quarantine on compassionate grounds for the purposes of being present during the final moments of life for a loved one or to support someone who is critically ill and enter an acute care hospital, “health care facility”, or other settings where health system employees, contractors and subcontractors enter to provide care.

This process does not apply if the individual is symptomatic or has COVID-19 as they are no longer in Quarantine and are required under Section 6 of the Order to Isolate.

Prior to signing the Site Visit Authorization Limited Release from Federal Quarantine as required by the Government of Canada, an administrator of a designated site including site administrators of acute care hospitals, “health care facility”, and homeowner/proprietor where health system employees attend must complete the required Safe Visitation Site Approval Checklist as required by the Province of Alberta. This Safe Visitation Site Approval Checklist is available for administrators to download on the AHS.ca website.

Individuals requesting a limited exemption from Quarantine must agree to the following terms prior to the site administrator signing the Site Visit Authorization Limited Release from Federal Quarantine as required by the Government of Canada, which include, but are not limited to:

- You must quarantine as required except when travelling to and from the designated site of a planned compassionate visit.
- You acknowledge there is a risk of exposure to COVID-19 (for self and others) when leaving quarantine due to pre-symptomatic spread.
- Your visit may be delayed or cancelled by the site administrator if the designated site is unable to support the visit due to clinical acuity, outbreak status change or grossly insufficient resources.
  - Note: “health care facilities” must satisfy the requirements as set out in Record of Decision CMOH Order 29-2020 which states that every effort must be made to facilitate end of life visitation. Visitation should not be cancelled in a “health care facilities” but may be delayed due to outbreak status change or grossly insufficient resources.
- You must assess your health leading up to and on the day(s) of the scheduled visit(s), and if you become aware that you have a confirmed case of COVID-19 or exhibit COVID-19-like symptoms as per paragraph V of the Compassionate
Exemption, you must enter isolation as per Section 6 of CMOH Orders 05-2020 and 28-2020.

- You must travel in private vehicles of which you are the only passenger or, if you are not the only passenger, where possible, be continuously wearing a mask and distanced as much as possible from any other persons in that private vehicle.
- You will be required to complete a health screening prior to entering the designated site, which could include but is not limited to a temperature check for fever over 38 degrees Celsius.
- You will be given a dated visitor sticker that you must wear each time you visit.
- You will be given personal protective equipment (PPE) which you must wear at all times in the health care facility, including in the room and during the visitation.
- You will only be permitted to go from the entrance, to visit in a designated location and must inform the Unit when you complete each visit. You will leave the building immediately upon completion of each visit.
- If you begin to experience any COVID-19-like symptoms, you will leave the building immediately and notify the site promptly by telephone that you developed symptoms during your visit.
- You will maintain a minimum of 2 metres distancing from every other person, including the individual that you are visiting.
- You will perform hand hygiene when entering and leaving the facility and when entering and leaving the patient’s/resident’s room.

This form is available on the AHS.ca website.