June 10, 2020

Re: Exemption: Designated family & support person for obstetrical patients

Pursuant to the recommendations of the Chief Medical Officer of Health for Alberta a public health emergency was declared in the Province of Alberta on March 17, 2020 pursuant to s. 52.1 of the Public Health Act of Alberta.

Further to that declaration of a public health emergency the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH), pursuant to her authority under s. 29(2.1) of the Public Health Act, made CMOH Order 05-2020 (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 of a public health emergency.

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.

Pursuant to Section 10 of the Order I am satisfied that the following persons should be exempted from the Order upon the following conditions:

- a person who is a close contact as defined in Section 5 of the Order of an obstetrical patient who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 and has been requested by an obstetrical patient to attend to hospital or other medical facility with the obstetrical patient as an essential support person; AND
- the hospital or medical facility is aware of the fact that the essential support person is in Isolation or Quarantine and still able to safely provide care.

The essential support person is exempt from the provisions of this Order that require Isolation or Quarantine and may attend at hospital or medical facility to the extent necessary to allow an obstetrical patient to receive medical care at a hospital or medical facility and upon complying with the following:

i) The essential support person shall only leave their own Quarantine or Isolation premises or the obstetrical patient’s Quarantine or Isolation premises to attend to the hospital or other medical facility so the obstetrical patient may receive medical care.

ii) The essential support person shall advise the hospital or other medical facility as the case may be that the person or the obstetrical patient as the case may be are in Quarantine or Isolation pursuant to this Order and shall follow all instructions provided by the staff of that facility concerning accessing the facility premises.
iii) Where practical, the essential support person shall use private transportation of which they are the sole occupant with the obstetrical patient and travel directly to and from their Quarantine or Isolation premises to the location where the obstetrical patient is to receive their medical care with no stops in between.

iv) If the essential support person must use shared transportation with the obstetrical patient the person shall, in addition to travelling directly to and from their Quarantine or Isolation premises to the hospital or medical facility with no stops in between, also where possible, engage in social distancing of no less than 2 meters from other persons using the same shared transportation.

v) When arriving at the hospital or other medical facility with the obstetrical patient the essential support person shall obey all directions from medical staff concerning precautions against COVID-19 transmission including the following:

a. Where the essential support person becomes or develops any signs and symptoms of COVID-19 including but not limited to a temperature equal or higher than 38 degrees Celsius the essential support person must leave the hospital and contact 811 or use the online COVID-19 self-assessment tool;

b. Where the obstetrical patient is admitted and is still symptomatic with COVID-19 at the date of admission or there is a confirmed COVID-19 case in the essential support person’s Isolation or Quarantine premises that is still symptomatic the following shall occur:

   i. The essential support person may remain as a dyad with the obstetrical patient in the hospital or medical facility with both persons under contact and droplet isolation. This will include the facility providing access to bathroom facilities and food;

   ii. During the time the essential support person is on the facility premises that person must wear a mask at all times, engage in regular hand hygiene, and agree to be screened by the facility staff every four hours for COVID-19; and

   iii. Where the essential support person leaves the patient room where the obstetrical patient has been admitted the essential support person will not be allowed to re-enter the room and must leave the facility.

c. Where the obstetrical patient develops COVID-19 symptoms subsequent to admission or is awaiting COVID-19 swab results at the time of admission the following shall occur:

   i. If the obstetrical patient is suspected of having COVID-19 and the essential support person has been a close contact of the obstetrical patient the essential support person may remain with the obstetrical patient during the duration of that person’s admission if the essential support person is asymptomatic and agrees to wear a mask at all times and perform regular hand hygiene during the duration of the admission;
ii. If the essential support person is asymptomatic and is a close contact of the obstetrical patient that person may remain as a dyad of the obstetrical patient with the essential support person being under contact and droplet isolation. This will include the facility providing access to bathroom facilities and food;

iii. The essential support person will agree to be screened by the facility staff every four hours for COVID-19; and

iv. Where the essential support person leaves the patient room where the obstetrical patient has been admitted the essential support person will not be allowed to re-enter the room and must leave the facility

vi) All other applicable provision of Order 05-2020 are in effect.

Any person who is exempted from this Order must continue to follow appropriate hygiene, social distancing, and other measures identified by public health authorities to the extent possible to protect other Albertans from further exposure to COVID-19.

The exemption provided by this letter 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 June 10, 2020.

Yours sincerely,

[signature]

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