



## Group Treatment FAQs

### Question 1) Can we start seeing patients or students in small groups in-person?

**Answer:** Yes, you may. However, you must meet all the following conditions:

- Obtain and document consent for group treatment
  - When obtaining consent to treat in groups, make sure you explain all the risks, and all the measures you are taking to mitigate the risk of infection. You will also discuss the benefits of group treatment and alternative services.
- Complete an active COVID-19 screen for every group member prior to each group session
- Complete a point of care risk assessment (PCRA) for every group member for each group session
- Make sure that you have all infection prevention and control (IPAC) measures in place
- Maintain the required physical distance between all group members and ensure adequate space to provide group treatment
- Ensure group participants follow the rules regarding touching equipment and materials, PPE etc.
- Group members must wear PPE if tolerated
- Clean and disinfect the equipment or materials used
- Have enough time for cleaning and disinfecting materials and surfaces between groups

Seeing patients and students in groups may increase the risk of infection. Inform your administrator, manager, or the school principal that you wish to conduct group treatment. If they do not want you to offer groups, you must follow their direction.

Please consider the following factors before deciding to see patients in groups:

- Medical status of each patient or student
- Level of comfort or anxiety of the patient or student being part of a group
- Current number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in your region and/or patient setting
- Your agency or clinic's direction regarding group treatment policies
- Degree to which the intervention may require temporary removal of masks or PPE, for example, the need to demonstrate lip and tongue movements or for lip reading
- Degree to which the intervention involves touching and sharing of equipment and/or materials
- Other risk factors identified in your work environment
- Weigh the clinical benefits of running a small group in-person versus the risk of transmitting COVID-19
- Degree of ventilation of the workspace assigned for group treatment

- If you are considering group treatment in the schools, ensure all students are in the same cohort
- Consider if you can run the group virtually

**Question 2) Are there any additional documentation requirements for running in-person groups during COVID-19?**

**Answer:** Follow all documentation requirements from the [Records Regulation](#). In addition, document the following:

- Consent discussions with patients or substitute decision makers regarding how you will mitigate the risk of infection in the group by using IPAC measures; and
- Results of active COVID-19 screen and the PCRA

**Question 3) How many group members is safe?**

**Answer:** Fewer is always better to reduce the risk of transmission. However, the upper limit is dictated by the current directives issued by the government regarding the numbers of people who can be in a group. Establish if there are any further restrictions or recommendations about the size of groups from your employers. Always consider the treatment goals of the group and weigh them against the risks of infection.