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## Memorandum

**To:** ADP-Registered Vendors for Home Oxygen Therapy

**From:** David Schachow, Interim Director, Assistive Devices Program

**Date:** March 20, 2020

**Subject:** **COVID-19 Pandemic – Home Oxygen Therapy**  
(UPDATE to memo dated March 18, 2020)

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Given the recent developments in the status of COVID-19 and the impact of the pandemic on Ontario residents who need home oxygen therapy, the Assistive Devices Program (ADP) is making temporary changes to its policies in order to support the health care professionals, ADP-registered vendors, hospitals and Long-Term Care Homes (LTCH) who provide care for these patients. These questions and answers supplement those included in the memo dated March 18, 2020.

**1. Will the ADP waive the requirement to renew an ADP client's continuing eligibility for home oxygen therapy and extend funding for the duration of the pandemic?**

In order to limit client contact, ADP will modify the requirements for funding for home oxygen therapy to be renewed after 3 months and 12 months from the date oxygen therapy was initiated in the home. In order to renew home oxygen therapy, the vendor should submit the renewal application, with test results populated from the previous application(s) and ensure that either the applicant's prescriber has signed the form (not applicable for 9 month renewals) or provided a prescription as per question #4 below (in which case, the vendor must populate the required prescriber fields, including the prescriber's OHIP billing number in the Application for Funding Home Oxygen Therapy). When adding the test results, please include new testing dates that fit within the Program's re-assessment period. The client does not need to complete the "Applicant's Consent and Signature" section; however, proof will be required that the client has received the system. The Ministry will notify ADP-registered vendors when this temporary measure is no longer permitted.

**2. Will the ADP accept oximetry tests performed by a Regulated Health Professional employed by a hospital or a LTCH?**

The ADP will accept oximetry test results performed by a Regulated Health Professional (RHP), for example, a RHP employed by the hospital or LTCH. If the oximetry study is performed by a RHP employed by a hospital or LTCH, they must complete the following steps.

- a. The RHP employed by the hospital or LTCH will perform the oximetry study and record the test results on the printout of the oximetry study.
- b. If the hospital or LTCH does not have an oximeter with printout capabilities, the ADP will accept a manual recording of the oximetry test results.
- c. As per ADP policy (Section 420.04 of the Home Oxygen Therapy Policy and Administration Manual) the RHP employed by the hospital or LTCH must record the following information on the oximetry study:
  - i. name of the applicant;
  - ii. date and time the oximetry study was performed;
  - iii. name/professional designation of the RHP performing the oximetry study; and
  - iv. the RHP's college registration number.
- d. The RHP employed by the hospital or LTCH must sign the oximetry study and confirm the following statement.

**“I confirm that I performed a pulse oximetry test on (insert applicant's name) on (insert date). This test was conducted to the best of my ability.”**
- e. The RHP employed by the ADP-registered vendor will record the oximetry tests results on the application form, in Section 2, Devices and Eligibility: Test Results.
- f. The ADP-registered vendor will submit to the ADP a copy of the oximetry study along with the application form.

The Ministry will notify ADP-registered vendors when this temporary measure is no longer permitted.

The ADP will continue to accept an oximetry study performed by a RHP employed by an ADP-registered vendor. Normal practice when completing the application should be followed.

**3. For new home oxygen therapy clients residing at home, will the ADP waive the requirement for a Regulated Health Professional to provide in-home training and education?**

For clients in their own home, the ADP will waive the requirement for the RHP employed by the ADP-registered vendor to provide **in-home** client, family and/or caregiver training and education if, in the opinion of the RHP, alternative teaching methods can be used, without risk to the client. For example, video-conferencing, telephone education, or in-person communication from a distance. Education and training are still required. The Ministry will notify ADP-registered vendors when this temporary measure is no longer permitted.

**4. Will the ADP waive the requirement for a prescriber to provide a signature on the Application for Funding Home Oxygen Therapy?**

In addition to now accepting non-original prescriber signatures on applications (memo: "COVID-19 Pandemic – Home Oxygen Therapy", dated March 18, 2020, question #2), the Program will also accept a prescription from the prescriber attached to the application. In this case, the vendor must populate the required prescriber fields, including the prescriber's OHIP billing number in the Application for Funding Home Oxygen Therapy. The Ministry will notify ADP-registered vendors when this temporary measure is no longer permitted.

**5. For new applicants will the ADP waive the requirement for an Independent Exercise Assessment?**

To facilitate the discharge from the hospital for in-patients with exertional hypoxemia only and to confirm eligibility for home oxygen therapy:

- the ADP will accept exercise testing performed in the hospital by a RHP;
- the ADP will waive the requirement for a single-blind study; and
- the RHP must complete the steps outlined in question #2 (a – d).

The ADP-registered vendor must complete the steps outlined in question #2 (e –f).

**6. Will the ADP accept a level 3 sleep study in place of a level 1 diagnostic sleep study for individuals with suspected Obstructive Sleep Apnea Syndrome (OSAS)?**

At the current time the ADP has not made any changes to the medical eligibility criteria for Positive Airway Pressure Systems.

**7. Will the ADP increase payments to home oxygen therapy vendors?**

In recognition of the importance of home oxygen therapy during this pandemic, the ADP has prioritized the assessment and processing of applications for home oxygen therapy. Vendors should expect to see significant progress in their next Invoice and Application Status Report.

All questions related to this memorandum should be sent to: [adpvendors@ontario.ca](mailto:adpvendors@ontario.ca).

Thank you for your continued commitment and service to Ontarians during this pandemic.

(original signed by)

David Schachow