

CREATING A *CULTURE OF SAFETY* IN COVID-19 COMMUNITY OUTREACH



WITHIN YOURSELF...

- educate yourself on how social and historical contexts shape an individual's experiences
- continue to examine your own privileges, power, biases, and assumptions
- be aware of existing power dynamics between community organizations and WCH

WITH CLIENTS...

- introduce yourself in a friendly manner
- sit down when talking to clients (if possible)
- ask 'what name can I call you'?
- use gender neutral language
- be friendly and empathetic
- ask preferred language and use on-site interpreters or language line if needed
- be sensitive in asking for documentation and identification
- be sensitive that receiving a COVID test or vaccination can be triggering for some - always ask:
 - how do you usually respond to these types of tests/vaccines/needles?
 - would it be helpful to discuss some grounding techniques, for example deep breathing?
 - can I put my hand on your shoulder, etc.?
 - what arm would you prefer?
- be approachable and flexible to meet clients where/how/when they prefer, to best respect their needs



WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS...

- enter the shared space with humility and respect - we are guests
- listen more, talk carefully, and make sure everyone's ideas are heard
- respect different ways of knowing and being
- respect different styles of leadership, communication and problem solving
- engage in open and honest dialogue
- rely on the organization's staff who are present and are a trusted source of support and guidance

REMINDERS:

1. Clients do not need OHIP cards; other forms of ID can be used for registration. Address does NOT need to be entered into CoVaxON or other databases.
2. All clients have a right to be tested/vaccinated. Treat them with respect and dignity regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, class, sobriety, age, ability, mental health status, immigration status, and so on.
3. We are institutional allies and guests, NOT the ones in charge; our community partners are leading the show and are experts in their community. Please be mindful of this in set-up, flow, and engagement in all events.
4. You are the face of the healthcare system to these clients and communities; be gentle and use your encounters with them as an opportunity to (re)build trust.
5. Clients may feel nervous, anxious, on-edge, or triggered; recognize triggers and know that trauma reactions are not personal. Express concern for safety and well-being.
6. Remember that your role is to welcome and help people feel safe and supported.

