

Appendix B – Interview Guide

Nova Scotia Primary Care Provider Perceptions of COVID-19 Study Interview:

Thank you for participating in this interview. Today we will discuss your perceptions and experiences during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Topic 1: Perceived Impact of COVID-19 on the NS Primary Health Care System and Capacity to Manage and Respond

**Please ask participants about their experience in relation to "then" (the beginning of the pandemic) and "now"*

1. To start, could you first tell me a bit about your position and the contexts where you work? If you work in more than one location, please describe them.
2. Please discuss your experience of the COVID-19 outbreak here in Nova Scotia? **Probes:** *Stage of outbreak; degree of preparation; response and management.*
3. Now I would like you to think about the level of preparedness and impact of COVID-19 more locally. Let's begin by discussing the impact of COVID-19 on all of your place(s) of work (office, hospital, long term care, walk-in clinic, etc.)?
Probes: *Impact on patient care; organization of care (triage, phone visits, virtual visits, screening, COVID-19 care, acute non-COVID-19 care, etc.); shift to "virtual care"/working from home; volumes and demand for care; vulnerable groups – underlying conditions, elderly; perceived effectiveness of these practices; changes in policy/care options/fee codes; workflow; managing teams/staff/relationships/working from home/juggling personal and professional duties; having to quarantine themselves/patients/finding coverage; business/financial impact/staff salaries).*
4. How have your work environment(s) managed and responded to the COVID-19 outbreak? **Probes:** *Protocols to prevent/reduce spread; guidelines for PPE, PPE allocation and use, access to resources, capacity to respond (e.g., supply shortages; insufficient equipment, PPE, masks, access to testing for patients/staff; cross-location care concern); perception of personal risk; perceived adherence to following protection practices (gaps, short cuts).*
5. What do you think are the key challenges your workplace(s) is/are facing or that you believe your practice/setting has yet to face with respect to the current pandemic? Why?

Topic 2: Information Access and Information Sharing/Dissemination

**Please ask participants about their experience in relation to "then" (the beginning of the pandemic) and "now"*

1. How do you get your information about COVID-19?
Probes: *Sources of info.; colleagues e.g. NSHA/NS government, professional does, colleges; ability to stay up to date and informed, vetting credibility of information; best sources and their attributes.*

2. How are you using information that you receive about COVID-19?

Probes: In-patient care (clinical and organizational), family care, self-care.

3. What do you think are key messages of misinformation about COVID-19? What communication strategies are working/not working?

Probes: How do you feel this has impacted your response, your colleagues, public response?

Topic 3: Direct Impact of COVID-19 on Self

*Please ask participants about their experience in relation to "then" (the beginning of the pandemic) and "now"

1. How has COVID-19 directly impacted your professional life? *Probes: Coping; stress; fear; uncertainty; unpredictability.*

2. How has COVID-19 directly impacted your personal life?

Probes: Family; home life; coping; stress; fear; uncertainty; financially.

3. What responsibilities should local health authorities have to their employees' families during the COVID-19 outbreak?

4. How do you think people are making decisions about whether or not to go to work during the current infectious disease outbreak?

Probes: How does this normally work when you/colleagues are sick? Has this changed given the current situation?

Closing: *Please ask participants about their experience in relation to "then" (the beginning of the pandemic) and "now"
Re: the question below, have their recommendations (if any) changed/evolved since that first time period?

1. What is the one recommendation you would make to health leaders (such as health authority/ professional organizations/ Department of Health) with regard to supporting primary care:

- As we move forward with this pandemic?
- For future pandemics?

2. Do you have any final thoughts?

Thank you all for participating in our COVID-19 interview. We intend to generate a one-page document summarizing key findings from the interviews. Would you like to receive this document via email when it is ready?