

HALTON REGION PUBLIC HEALTH • Office of the Medical Officer of Health

TEL: 905-825-6000 • TOLL FREE: 1-866-442-5866 • FAX: 905-825-1444

TO: Halton Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Emergency Departments

FROM: Dr. Hamidah Meghani, Medical Officer of Health

DATE: March 11, 2020

RE: First confirmed case of COVID-19 in Halton Region

QUICK FACTS

- On March 11, 2020 Halton Region Public Health received notification of its first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Halton Region.
- The case is a 32 year old female, who returned from Hawaii on March 7, became symptomatic on March 9 and was tested at Hamilton Health Sciences' (HHS) Juravinski Hospital on Monday, March 9. She is a frontline healthcare worker at HHS who resides in Burlington and is currently at home in self-isolation.
- Halton Region Public Health, Hamilton Public Health and Hamilton Health Sciences are working closely and are actively engaged in contact tracing and case management.

KEY MESSAGES FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Assessment and Testing Considerations

- COVID-19 testing may be considered in patients who present with respiratory symptoms AND travel anywhere outside of Canada OR are close contacts of a confirmed case of COVID-19.
- Please report ALL patients being tested for COVID-19 to Halton Region Public Health by calling 311.
- Only physicians who can safely use fit-tested N95 respirators and have other droplet/contact precautions should conduct physical examination and testing of PUIs for COVID-19.
- Physicians who cannot safely use an N95 respirator should use a surgical mask to conduct a clinical history and visual assessment while under droplet/contact precautions and maintaining a two metre distance from the patient.
- Halton Region Public Health does NOT provide PPE to community or hospital healthcare providers. For any questions/concerns regarding PPE supply, please contact the Ministry of Health at EOCLogistics.MOH@ontario.ca

Screening

- All healthcare providers should conduct both passive screening (signage) and active screening (asking questions) for COVID-19 before providing care to patients.
- Patients should be screened on the phone before scheduling appointments.
- Where patients present without being screened on the phone, trained staff should screen patients.
- Staff conducting the screening should ideally be located behind a barrier to protect from droplet/contact spread or try to maintain a two metre distance from symptomatic patients who have yet to put on a mask. A plexiglass barrier can protect reception staff from sneezing/coughing patients.

Cleaning and Disinfection

- Areas where COVID-19 PUIs have been assessed, tested or isolated require adequate cleaning and disinfection. Clean and disinfect the area and any equipment the patient had contact with.
- Any products with a DIN number and a label claim against enveloped viruses are expected to kill COVID-19 when used according to manufacturer's instructions. A product list can be found on halton.ca/coronavirus.

KEY MESSAGES FOR PATIENTS

- Before making travel plans, check the Government of Canada [travel advisories](#) for up-to-date information on areas impacted by COVID-19.
- The Public Health Agency of Canada is now [recommending](#) that Canadians **avoid all cruise ship travel** due to the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak.
- All travellers should monitor their health for 14 days after arriving back in Canada, regardless of their location of travel.
- While the risk of COVID-19 infection in our community continues to remain **low** at this time, stay informed by regularly visiting the Halton Region Public Health website at halton.ca/coronavirus.

Please report all suspected/confirmed cases of [Diseases of Public Health Significance](#) to Public Health immediately by calling 311, 905-825-6000 or toll free at 1-866-442-5866.

PLEASE POST IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS AND PHYSICIAN LOUNGES

IF YOU CAN'T ACCESS HYPERLINKS, PLEASE SIGN UP FOR ELECTRONIC UPDATES BY EMAILING DOCTORS@HALTON.CA