TO: Halton Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Emergency Departments
FROM: Dr. Hamidah Meghani, Medical Officer of Health
DATE: February 27, 2020
RE: Updated information re: COVID-19

QUICK FACTS

- The case definition for a person under investigation (PUI) for COVID-19 has been updated to include countries in addition to China.
- Physicians, hospitals and other facilities should report persons meeting the PUI criteria below to Halton Region Public Health by calling 311:
  - A person with fever and/or onset of cough or difficulty breathing AND any of the following within 14 days prior to onset of illness:
    - Travel to an Impacted Area*
    - Close contact with a confirmed or possible case of COVID-19, or
    - Close contact with a person with acute respiratory illness who has been to an impacted area
- *Impacted Area includes all countries with a Government of Canada Travel Health Advisory for COVID-19. As of February 25, 2020, this includes: China, Hong Kong, Iran, Italy, Japan, Singapore and South Korea.

KEY MESSAGES FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

- All healthcare providers should report any cases in which COVID-19 testing is being considered to Halton Region Public Health by calling 311.
- Testing for COVID-19 includes collection of both nasopharyngeal AND throat swabs.
- Only healthcare providers who can safely use and have access to fit-tested N95 masks should collect specimens for COVID-19 testing.
- All primary care settings should follow routine practices plus droplet and contact precautions for screening, and when providing care to patients (i.e., surgical/procedure mask, gown, eye protection, gloves, hand hygiene).
- N95 masks are only required for aerosol generating procedures, including collection of nasopharyngeal and throat swabs.
- Please refer to the Ministry’s Guidance for Primary Care Providers for details regarding screening, testing and management of cases.

KEY MESSAGES FOR PATIENTS

- Travelers who have returned from Hubei province should:
  - Contact Halton Region Public Health by calling 311, AND
  - Self-isolate and avoid close contact with others, including those in their home, for 14 days from the date they left Hubei.
- Travelers who have returned from an Impacted Area* should:
- Monitor for signs and symptoms for 14 days from the date they left the Impacted Area;
- If symptoms develop, self-isolate and contact Halton Region Public Health by calling 311. If symptoms are severe, call 911 and inform them of symptoms and travel history.

- For the most up to date and reliable information please visit the following websites:
  - Halton Region
  - Ministry of Health
  - Public Health Agency of Canada

- Travelers should check the Travel Canada website for the latest travel advice prior to departure.

Please report all suspected/confirmed cases of Diseases of Public Health Significance to Halton Region 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