

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

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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