

February 13, 2020

From the Office of Dr. Joyce Lock, Medical Officer of Health, Southwestern Public Health

Update: 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) for Primary Care Providers

Current Situation

Case Counts

- As of February 11, more than 42, 638 cases; 1016 deaths have been reported in China. A total of 476 confirmed cases have occurred outside mainland China. There are 7 cases in Canada.
- On January 30, 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency committee of the World Health Organization declared the outbreak a “public health emergency of international concern”.

NEW Information

Official Name

WHO renamed this novel coronavirus “COVID-19”, short for coronavirus disease 2019.

Case Definition

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) has expanded the case definition to include travel to mainland, China (not just Hubei Province).

Testing

As of February 10 pre-approval for 2019-nCoV testing is no longer required, provided the specific **requisition** is completed, and all mandatory fields are completed.

Recommendations for Returning Travelers

On February 7, PHAC issued new recommendations for returning travelers:

All travelers returning from Hubei Province (includes Wuhan City) should:

- Contact their local health unit (SWPH) within 24 hours of arriving in Canada.
- Self-isolate. Self-isolation includes staying home from work, school and all other activities for 14 days from the date the traveler left Hubei Province.
- Contact their local health unit (SWPH) if they develop symptoms.

All travelers returning from mainland China should:

- Monitor themselves for the development of respiratory symptoms for 14 days after leaving China.
- Contact the health unit (SWPH) if they develop symptoms.

Screening, Signage, Testing, & Personal Protective Equipment

Screening

Conduct screening of all patients before scheduling appointments. When possible, schedule ill patients at the end of the day.

Please note that the **case definition** has expanded to include travel to/from **mainland China**.

Signage

Post screening signage at the entry to the office as well as reception areas. Ensure patients with respiratory symptoms:

- Put on a surgical mask
- Perform hand hygiene
- Cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing/sneezing or cough/sneeze into their arm
- Wait in a separate area, away from other patients, if possible

NEW: The Ministry of Health is revising patient and visitor signage to include the most up-to-date list of affected areas. SWPH will post updated signage on our [website](#), once available.

Personal Protective Equipment

Primary care staff who can safely use an N95 respirator and who are fit-tested, should wear an N95 respirator when assessing patients for COVID-19. Staff who can't use an N95 respirator should follow contact/droplet precautions. For more information, click [here](#).

Testing

Contact Public Health to discuss the most appropriate setting for testing.

Reporting

Report all suspect cases to us using the ARI Report Form: <https://www.swpublichealth.ca/forms-0>

Additional Information and Resources

- [Guidance for Health Care Workers and Health Sector Employers on novel coronavirus associated with Wuhan, China \(2019-nCoV\)](#), Ontario Ministry of Health
- [Travel Advice](#) Public Health Agency of Canada
- [PHO: Novel Coronavirus](#)
- [PHAC: Novel Coronavirus](#)
- [SWPH Updates](#)

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