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

Update: 2019 Novel Coronavirus (n-CoV)

Current Situation

- **Case Counts**

- A total of 581 confirmed cases have been reported for novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) globally; of the 581 cases reported, 571 cases were reported from China. Of the 571 confirmed cases in China, 375 cases were confirmed from Hubei Province of which Wuhan is the capital city; of the 571 cases, 95 cases are severely ill and 17 deaths have been reported (all from Hubei Province).
- Cases have been reported in Thailand, Japan, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Taipei Municipality, China, Macau Special Administrative Region, United States of America and the Republic of Korea; All had travel history to Wuhan.
- Among the cases reported to-date, a spectrum of illness has been seen, with most cases reported as having mild illness.

Screening, Assessment and Infection Control

- [Novel Coronavirus: Tips for Family Doctors](#)

- **Screening and Scheduling Appointments:**

- Ideally, screen patients before scheduling appointments using: [Algorithm: Screening for Acute Respiratory Illness.](#)
- Schedule those presenting symptoms at the **end of the day** for easier room disinfection afterward.
- Consider posting information on your website, having a message on your voicemail and/or sending an email blast to encourage patients to self-identify. A sample message to patients may be as follows: “If you have a cough and fever, and if you or someone close to you has recently travelled to China, PLEASE alert the clinic staff when you call for an appt and when you go to the clinic. This will help the staff to do the right things to care for you and for the other people in the clinic at the time”.
- Post signage at the clinic entry way: [Stop, do you have a New or Worsening Cough, Fever?](#)
- Postpone elective procedures that generate droplets (e.g. dental care).

- **Infection Control:**
 - **Ask patient to:**
 - Clean their hands, wear a surgical mask
 - Wait in a separate isolation area (room) or maintain 2 metre distance from other patients. **Consider allocating a separate airborne infection isolation room, if possible.
 - **Initiate additional precautions:**
 - Perform vigilant hand hygiene;
 - Use gloves, gowns, fit-tested, seal-checked N95 respirators and eye protection when entering the same room as the patient or when transporting or caring for the patient.
 - For additional information refer to the Provincial Infectious Disease Advisory Committee Best Practice Recommendations for **Infection Prevention and Control in Clinical Office Practices.**

Note: The Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is recommending **airborne precautions out of an abundance of caution. This means staff caring for people who have or who are being investigated for the virus should be wearing fit-tested N95 masks as part of their PPE and acute care settings should utilize negative pressure isolation rooms.

Clinical Presentation

- **The case definition for a person under investigation:**

A person with fever and acute respiratory illness, or pneumonia
AND any of the following:
 Travel to Wuhan, China in the 14 days before onset of illness
OR
 Close contact with a confirmed or probable case of 2019-nCoV
OR
 Close contact with a person with acute respiratory illness who has been to Wuhan, China within 14 days prior to their illness onset
- **Currently only those meeting this case definition should be considered for testing for 2019-nCoV.**

Reporting

- Novel coronavirus is now a **reportable disease** under legislation and you can now report a person under investigation or a suspect case directly to the public health unit as per usual practice rather than directly to the ministry.
- [Reportable Disease Notification Form](#)

Additional Information and Resources

- [Interim Guidance for Novel Coronaviruses](#), World Health Organization
- [Travel Advice](#), Public Health Agency of Canada
- [CDC: Novel Coronavirus](#)
- [WHO: Novel Coronavirus](#)
- [Check SWPH website for updates](#)

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