

COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus)

Update: Antigen Point of Care Testing, VOCs, Household Contacts of a Case Contact, Matching Portal

March 26, 2021 at 3:00 p.m.

An Update from Dr. Joyce Lock, Medical Officer of Health, Southwestern Public Health

Please share with staff

Antigen Point of Care Testing

- The Ministry has updated its guidance to include locations for symptomatic individuals and those with confirmed contact with a COVID-19 case to obtain diagnostic PCR testing.
- www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/Antigen_Screening_Guidance_2021-03-5.pdf

VOCs: Use Extreme Caution

- Currently, a total of 26.3% of overall COVID-19 cases in our region have tested positive for a variant of concern (VOC).
- Local epidemiology data has also identified an increase in percent positivity for VOCs, and we have observed an increase in transmissibility.
- **I respectfully request primary care providers and health care leaders to reinforce messaging to individuals to use extreme caution with interpersonal interactions, and to remain within personal household bubbles except for essential activities.**

Household Contacts of a Case Contact

- Due to increased transmissibility of VOCs, especially within households, enhanced identification of contacts has been in place in Ontario since February 26.
- An important point regarding household contacts of a case-contact:
 - Contacts of a case are counselled to tell their household members that they must stay home (except for essential reasons such as work and school) for the duration of the contact's quarantine period.
 - For example, Jane is a close contact of a confirmed case. All of Jane's household members must also stay home while Jane is self-isolating.
- Refer to the most recent [Case and Contact Management Guidance](#) for clarity.

Health Workforce Matching Portal

- The Ministry is seeking individuals who have experience in health care who can help prevent and control the spread of COVID-19.
- If you are a health care worker and interested in being matched to positions where services are needed, visit the [Health Workforce Matching Portal](#).