

## **COVID-19 (formerly known as 2019 nCoV): Update #6 Updated Case Definition – Additional Countries Added: Hong Kong, Iran, Italy, Japan, Singapore, South Korea**

**Attention:** Physicians, Emergency Departments, Infection Control Practitioners, Occupational Health Practitioners, Walk-In Clinics/Urgent Care Clinics, Nurse Practitioners, EMS, Designated Officers, Midwives, Family Health Teams, Pharmacies, Central LHIN, NSM LHIN

**Date:** February 27, 2020 (Updated February 28, 2020)

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As outlined by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) (<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>), there have been 13 confirmed cases of COVID-19 (six in Ontario and seven in British Columbia) to date. All of them can be traced back to an individual's travel history from an internationally affected area. To date, the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) has had a total of 19 persons under investigation, 17 have tested negative for COVID-19 and 2 are still pending.

**There is increasing evidence of community transmission in countries outside of China. The health unit is preparing for this possibility occurring locally in the upcoming weeks/months. Given the increasing likelihood of a COVID-19 pandemic, we are now advising that people prepare for that possibility by ensuring at least a two-week supply of food staples, medications and essential household supplies, and have a family care plan in the event family members fall ill or have to undergo home isolation due to public health measures, such as quarantine.**

**We are also working closely with the LHIN and local primary care leaders to identify at least one medical practice in each of our six LHIN sub-regions to be equipped and prepared to assess and test potential COVID-19 cases in the event the number of people needed to be tested overwhelms the emergency departments.**

### **1. Person Under Investigation (PUI) Case Definition as of February 26, 2020:**

A person with fever and/or cough or difficulty breathing **AND** any of the following:

- Travel to **an impacted area** in the 14 days before onset of illness  
OR
- Close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19  
OR
- Close contact with a person with acute respiratory illness who has been to **the impacted areas** within 14 days prior to their illness onset



## COVID-19 Impacted Areas as of February 27, 2020

- Mainland China (excluding Macau, Taiwan)
- Hong Kong
- Iran
- Italy
- Japan
- Singapore
- South Korea

If you have a patient who meets the PUI definition, please contact the Infectious Diseases Team at 705-721-7520 ext. 8809 during regular business hours (Monday to Friday 8:30 to 4:30) or after hours at 1-888-225-7851.

### Testing Outside the Case Definition

**The Public Health Ontario Laboratory is no longer requiring clinicians to call ahead to test for COVID-19 if a patient is symptomatic. It is not recommended at this time to test asymptomatic patients.** If a clinician wants to test an asymptomatic patient, they should contact the Public Health Ontario Laboratory directly to discuss this further at 416-235-6556 / 1-877-604-4567 or the After Hours Emergency Duty Officer at 416-605-3113.

**If testing occurs, regardless if it is within the PUI case definition or not, the client will be considered a PUI and should self-isolate at home until the results are available. It should also be reported to SMDHU by contacting the Infectious Diseases Team at 705-721-7520 ext. 8809 during regular business hours (Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) or after hours at 1-888-225-7851.**

## 2. Specimen Collection

Public Health Ontario (PHO) has released a [COVID-19 Test Requisition Form](#). As outlined by PHO, please include the mandatory elements below on the requisition:

- Whether the individual meets criteria for a person under investigation (yes/ no)
- Travel history (country and dates)
- Contact of case or probable case (yes/no); if no, other sick contacts (yes/no; if yes, describe)
- Symptom onset date
- Patient symptoms (fever, cough, runny nose, pneumonia)
- Patient setting (ICU, hospitalized, ER or outpatient)

Specimens no longer are sent to the National Microbiology Lab (NML) for confirmation. The current test for COVID-19 (RT-PCR) at the Public Health Ontario Lab takes less than 24 hours to complete.

It is recommended that both a **nasopharyngeal swab (NPS) AND a viral throat swab be collected.** **Instructions on which swab kit and how to swab is outlined [here](#).** If the patient has a productive cough, it is further recommended to collect a sputum sample. Note that an N95 mask, and droplet and contact precautions are recommended for the clinician, but a negative-pressure room is not necessary if one is not available. COVID-19 at this time is not thought to be airborne, and therefore the room can be cleaned and used immediately after without the two hour waiting period that is recommended for airborne diseases such as measles.

For more information on the requirements, please visit PHO's Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Testing webpage at: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/laboratory-services/test-information-index/wuhan-novel-coronavirus>.

### 3. Travelers

Asymptomatic traveler recommendations remain the same as previous health fax where travelers from Hubei province in China should self-isolate for 14 days from the day they left the Hubei province to come to Canada and contact the Infectious Diseases Team at 705-721-7520 ext. 8809 during regular business hours (Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) or after hours at 1-888-225-7851.

Travelers from **COVID-19 impacted areas** should self-monitor for signs and symptoms for 14 days after leaving the impacted areas and contact the Infectious Diseases Team at the number listed above if symptoms develop.

Up to date travel health notices are listed at the following website:  
<https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notice>.

### 4. Personal Protective Equipment – Provincial Supplies

The Ministry of Health continues to be aware of ongoing challenges with regards to PPE supplies. If you have any questions, concerns or feedback regarding PPE, you can email the Ministry via the following e-mail address: [EOClogistics.moh@ontario.ca](mailto:EOClogistics.moh@ontario.ca).

### 5. Resources and Documents

There are a number of resources and documents available on the SMDHU website through our Health Professional Portal at: [www.smdhu.org/hpportal](http://www.smdhu.org/hpportal).

The Government of Ontario has a dedicated website for Coronavirus which has general information as well as provincial PUI statistics which are updated daily. This can be found at the following website address: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>.

The Ministry of Health has a dedicated website for Coronavirus with all relevant guidance and information. This can be found at the following website address:  
[www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus).

If you have any questions or to report persons under investigation for COVID-19, please contact the Infectious Diseases Team at 705-721-7520 ext. 8809 during regular business hours (Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) or after hours at 1-888-225-7851.