

News Releases



Media Bulletin

March 13, 2020

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) BULLETIN #10

To date, three presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 have been identified in Manitoba. In addition, Manitoba public health officials are recommending that Manitobans should consider taking additional social distancing measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Public health is updating a flight number from Vancouver International Airport to Winnipeg where individuals may have been exposed to COVID-19. Individuals on Air Canada flight AC 8622 on March 7 and March 8 in rows 24 to 29 are asked to self-isolate and monitor themselves for symptoms for 14 days since their last known contact or exposure. For more information on self-isolation and self-monitoring, visit www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/factsheets/coronavirus_selfisolation.pdf.

This includes cancelling or postponing any large-scale events with more than 250 attendees. This measure helps reduce prolonged (more than 10 minutes), close (less than two metres) contact between other individuals in public.

In addition, individuals in Winnipeg directed by Health Links-Info Santé to be tested for COVID-19 will be asked to visit a community screening location. Two new screening sites will both open at noon today.

One is at Mount Carmel Clinic (886 Main St.) and the other is at Access Transcona (845 Regent Ave. W.). This is in addition to two other sites that opened on March 12 at Access Winnipeg West (at 280 Booth Dr.) and Access Fort Garry (135 Plaza Dr.)

These four sites will serve as COVID-19 community screening sites, in addition to continuing with their regular operations. Patients should be referred for testing to attend to the community screening locations. Walk-in traffic without a referral is discouraged.

Testing at these sites will be available Monday to Friday 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Those who require screening, assessment and/or testing after hours will still be directed to urgent care sites and emergency departments.

People living outside Winnipeg who are concerned about their exposure to or risk of having COVID-19 can visit www.gov.mb.ca/health/coronavirus/ or call Health Links-Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257 (toll-free) for further information.

Work is also underway to increase capacity at Health Links-Info Santé. Staffing levels have been doubled and additional staff are being pulled in from other areas and trained today. Caller options have been streamlined and there is now a dedicated COVID-19 number to press. Usual scripts have also been shortened to reduce the length of calls once they are answered.

Public health officials continue to recommend these social distancing measures for all Manitobans.

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- minimizing prolonged (more than 10 minutes), close (less than two metres) contact between individuals in public;
- avoiding greetings that involve touching such as handshakes;
- disinfecting frequently used surfaces;
- following public health advice related to self-monitoring and self-isolation if you have travelled or have been exposed to someone ill with the virus; and
- avoiding all non-essential travel, as well as crowded places and events.

Public health officials are also advising schools and educational institutions to:

- ensure ill staff and students stay home from school, and support those who are self-isolating at home to ensure they do not fall behind in their studies;
- reduce large-group, crowded activities;
- increase desk distance between students; and
- consider implementing virtual or online classrooms, which reduces the number of people in classrooms and increases distance between staff and students.

Employers should review their business continuity plans and take steps to ensure their employees can:

- stay home when ill, without facing barriers such as the requirement for sick notes; and
- work from home if possible.

Employers should also consider:

- discontinuing non-essential work related travel outside of Manitoba; and
- encouraging virtual meetings to reduce prolonged, close contact between individuals.

Being prepared also means seeking official sources of information to ensure the most up-to-date and accurate information is being used. Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living is also urging media to exercise caution in reporting information related to the evolving COVID-19 situation and to avoid hearsay or speculation, as this can spread misinformation.

For more information, visit www.gov.mb.ca/health/coronavirus/index.html.

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