

March 23, 2020

**COVID-19
BULLETIN #29**

Public health officials advise an additional probable case of COVID-19 has been identified, while another case initially identified as probable has been ruled out. That case will be removed from the list, meaning the total number of lab-confirmed positive and probable positive cases in Manitoba remains at 20.

The newest probable positive case is a man in his 50s who lives in Winnipeg. At this time, the public health investigation indicates the case is related to travel. Information about flights where a person with a lab-confirmed case of COVID-19 had symptoms at the time of travel are updated as information becomes available at www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/flights.html.

Public health officials are strongly advising all Manitobans, including health-care providers, to cancel or postpone any non-essential travel. This includes international travel and travel within Canada. There should be no recreational, tourist or non-essential personal travel. In addition, effective immediately, public health officials are recommending that anyone who returns from travel, either international or domestic, should self-isolate and self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days following their return.

This recommendation does not include:

- the commercial transportation of goods and services;
- workers, including health-care workers who live in a neighbouring jurisdiction and travel to Manitoba for work; or
- normal personal travel in border communities including visits to a cottage.

If symptoms develop during the 14-day self-isolation or self-monitoring period, contact Health Links– Info Santé to determine if testing for COVID-19 should be

considered. In cases where testing is not recommended but symptoms are present, stay home (self-isolate) until well.

Health officials are reminding physicians, health-care providers and support staff returning from travel they MUST self-identify to their organization/site's occupational health services.

Research Manitoba is working with the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) to invest in the Canadian 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Rapid Research Funding Opportunity. The Manitoba government is investing \$800,000 and the CIHR is investing more than \$465,000 in three research projects including:

- investigating how logistical systems can adapt to a pandemic at the University of Manitoba;
- developing a cost-effective, point-of-need diagnostic test for COVID-19 at the Canadian Science Centre for Human and Animal Health; and
- developing a COVID-19 vaccine at the University of Manitoba.

In an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and keep in-home health-care providers and our communities safe, new screening steps will be undertaken in advance of home and community visits. Health-care providers are contacting clients to complete screening in advance of normal appointments. Wherever possible, this screening will occur over the phone but may also be conducted from an appropriate social distance (two metres or six feet) before entry to the home. Screening is intended to identify potential for exposure to COVID-19 within the household, and identify whether services may safely be postponed or offered in another way such as over the phone.

For visits that must occur in person as scheduled, providers will use appropriate personal protective equipment and follow proper hand hygiene protocols.

Any person concerned about their exposure to or risk of having COVID-19 should call Health Links–Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or toll-free at 1-888-315-

9257 to be screened to see if a test is required.

Eleven community testing sites throughout the province are open. The public is reminded that a referral to these sites is needed and they are not walk-in clinics. Information on locations and hours of operation are available at www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/locations.html.

For more information and to access the online screening tool for COVID-19, visit: www.manitoba.ca/covid19.