

SARS Bulletin for Healthcare Providers

Ministry of Health &
Long-Term Care

*A newsletter for
Healthcare Providers*

Issue no. 2, April 25, 2003

The government of Ontario is committed to providing the information healthcare providers require to deliver the services needed to manage SARS. As part of these ongoing communications, the government will be issuing a SARS bulletin on a regular basis to inform healthcare professionals of new directives and other pertinent information.

This bulletin provides an update on new directives and communications and does not replace or amend these documents.

SARS WEBSITE

The government continues to disseminate information on its public website, including information for healthcare providers. Users are directed to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care website, www.health.gov.on.ca. Information for the public is also available online at www.healthytontario.com.

KEY INFORMATION FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

- Staff working in acute care facilities should read the infection control directive issued to acute care hospitals on April 24th, which details air supply requirements, SARS patient room arrangements, personal protective equipment for staff and patient care activities.
- Healthcare workers are also directed to the SARS Clinical Decision Guide, which was issued on April 23rd and will be of particular interest to primary care providers.
- In addition to the Internet posting of SARS 'hot-spots,' providers may also call a dedicated phone line to hear a recorded message of this information. The number is 1-866-670-3155. The local number is 416-212-0890. Please note that the number will be activated on April 28th.

DIRECTIVES

- On April 23rd, new direction for acute care hospitals located outside the GTA was issued on supplies management.
- On April 24th, a new infection control directive was issued for acute care hospitals.
- Please consult your facility administration and organization/college to obtain copies of directives issued to date.

KEY SARS FACTS

April 24th

- There were NO new cases reported.

April 25th

- There were eight new cases reported.
- There were two deaths today.
- 10 cases were dropped from the suspect list.
- The Scarborough Hospital, Grace Division has passed its external audit and is now a Category 1 facility.
- The Bukas-Loob Sa Diyos Covenant Church parishioners have all completed their isolation period and no new cases of SARS were reported in this group.

- York Central Hospital was classified as a Category 1 hospital on April 19th and is expecting to resume full service in April 28th.
- The Scarborough Hospital, Grace Division is now classified as a Category 1 facility and will gradually resume services. For the time being their emergency department and critical care unit will remain closed.

NEWS

- Premier Ernie Eves announced yesterday that the government will provide \$25 million in funding to address surgical backlogs. The government also committed to addressing compensation issues for healthcare workers affected by the crisis as well as those who have had to go into isolation.
- The US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) remains in Toronto and a team has visited Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Science, Toronto East General and Mount Sinai hospitals.

Making healthcare work for you.



COMMUNICATIONS

- An educational video on proper gowning techniques is in production and will soon be available on the public Ministry of Health and Long-term Care website.
- An advertisement thanking the healthcare sector, the public and all others who have worked or supported those working to fight SARS will run in major daily newspapers throughout the province starting April 26th.
- The Premier of Ontario sent a letter of thanks to healthcare providers in the GTA April 24th.
- Press conferences with the Commissioner of Public Health, the Commissioner of Public Security and other medical experts continue to be held daily throughout the week at 3 p.m. or as needed. Unless circumstances warrant, there will be no press conference on April 26th or April 27th.

CURRENT CASE STATUS

(as of April 25, 2003, 1p.m.)

Probable	138
Suspect	127
Cumulative total	265
Total current cases*	89
Healthcare workers	80
Discharged	139
Deaths	18

* = in hospital

CONTACT INFORMATION

- Websites www.health.gov.on.ca, www.healthyonario.com
- Medical information hotline 1-866-212-2272

SARS ASSESSMENT CLINICS

Clinics assess and screen those people who are concerned that they may have been exposed to SARS, but not those people who have already been diagnosed.

Clinic staff will ensure that people who have been exposed are safely isolated and cared for in an environment that will help contain the spread of SARS.

Scarborough SARS Clinic

2867 Ellesmere Road (East side of Rouge Valley Health System's Centenary site, just north of the emergency department)
Daily (Monday to Sunday): 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

York Region SARS Assessment Clinic

6824 Hwy. 7 at the Ninth Line in Markham (former Versacare Facility)

Daily (Monday to Sunday): 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Outside of these hours, contact York Region Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m., seven days a week, or Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 (TTY 1-866-797-0007).

Etobicoke SARS Clinic

150 Sherway Drive, Etobicoke (Queensway Site of Trillium Health Care Centre)

Contact Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 (TTY 1-866-797-0007) outside of operating hours.

People visiting SARS Assessment Clinics are reminded of the following:

- If you need help, bring no more than one attendant with you to the clinic.
- Patients requiring an interpreter are requested to attempt to bring one with them to the clinic.
- Bring your Ontario Health Card.
- The role of the clinic is solely as a temporary assessment clinic for people who believe they may have been exposed to SARS. It should not be confused with a regular medical walk-in clinic or a hospital Emergency Department.