

SARS Bulletin for Healthcare Providers

Ministry of Health &
Long-Term Care

*A newsletter for
Healthcare Providers*

Issue no. 6, May 1, 2003

The government of Ontario is committed to providing the information healthcare providers require in order 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.

KEY INFORMATION FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

- Healthcare professionals are advised to take the simple precaution of remaining at home should they feel ill.
- Interim directives for high-risk procedures in critical care areas were issued today. These advise that:
 - High-risk procedures should be avoided whenever possible.
 - In situations where such procedures are unavoidable (e.g., intubation of a SARS patient in respiratory distress), staff should follow the additional level of staff precautions outlined in this document for these high-risk procedures.
 - Please consult these directives for full detail.
- An interim report on the outbreak of SARS in the greater Toronto area has been posted on the dedicated SARS website. Please contact your facility administration and organization/college to obtain this document.
- Healthcare professionals are advised to ensure that masks fit properly and securely as in the following photograph:



DIRECTIVES

- Interim directives for high-risk procedures in critical care areas were issued today.
- Q & As for all healthcare workers and facilities were issued today.
- French translations of the SARS screening tool and Q & As on self monitoring were also issued.
- Please consult your facility administration and organization/college to obtain copies of all directives issued to date.

KEY SARS FACTS

- Hospitalized cases have declined by almost 50% in the past 10 days.
- 31 probable cases in hospital compared to 53 on April 22nd.
- Active cases have dropped by 41% in the past 10 days.
- 32 active, probable cases, down from 58 on April 22nd.
- Discharges have risen by 32% in the past 10 days.
- 171 discharges, up from 129 on April 22nd.
- There were two SARS deaths yesterday.
- 52 hospital cases – 31 probable and 21 suspect.
- A press conference was held today in Toronto involving the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization and Health Canada.

CURRENT CASE STATUS

(As of May 1, 2003)

Probable	145
Suspect	119
Cumulative total	264
Total current cases*	52
Healthcare workers†	88
Discharged	171
Deaths	23

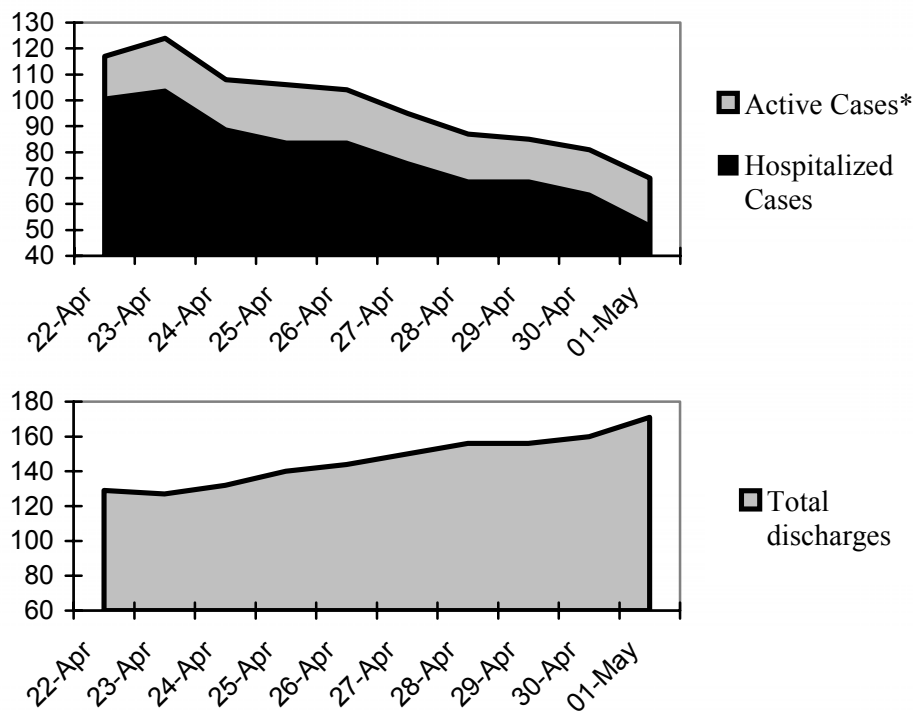
* = in hospital

† = probable & suspect

NEWS

This past weekend, researchers from the Michael Smith Genome Sciences Centre in Vancouver completed the DNA sequencing of the SARS virus. On Monday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released its own sequencing results, confirming the Canadian findings that the disease probably originated in animals. "We don't see any recombination," said Rob Holt, head of sequencing at the Genome Sciences Centre. "This is most likely a coronavirus that circulated among animals and which mutated rapidly," he added.

EPIDEMIOLOGY



* Active Cases includes probable and suspect cases in hospital, at home and cases under investigation at home.

COMMUNICATIONS

- A webcast detailing infection control protocols for healthcare professionals is tentatively planned for next Wednesday. Further details will be made available in this bulletin.
- Advertisements thanking healthcare professionals continue to run in 43 regional daily newspapers during this week.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization and Health Canada held a press conference in Toronto to discuss SARS.
- 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 or as needed.

CONTACT INFORMATION

- Websites www.health.gov.on.ca, www.healthyontario.com
- Medical information hotline 1-866-212-2272
- 'Hot spots' reporting line 1-866-670-3155 or locally 416-212-0890 (recorded message of potential transmission sites).