

SARS Bulletin for Healthcare Providers

Ministry of Health &
Long-Term Care

*A newsletter for
Healthcare Providers*

Issue no. 12, May 26, 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

- While the provincial emergency has not been reinstated, all healthcare professionals are required to follow the infection control and other procedures as set out in the 'new normal' directives, which were effective May 16th.

DIRECTIVES

- 'New normal' directives were effective on May 16th and all health facilities and healthcare providers must comply with them.
- An urgent notice to health and long-term care facilities and providers was issued on May 23rd detailing the points of possible exposure.
- Please consult your facility administration and organization/college to obtain copies of these and all directives issued to date.

NEWS

- Health Canada and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a preliminary report on May 15th on the ongoing investigation into SARS spread to health care workers. The report indicates that health care workers caring for SARS patients followed Health Canada's infection control guidelines. As an added precaution, however, the report recommends that workers should undergo additional training on the correct use and removal of personal protective equipment. The report recommends that health care workers caring for SARS patients should undergo training on the correct use and removal of personal protective equipment. The report is available online at: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/media/releases/2003/sars_statement.htm

KEY SARS FACTS

- There are 29 cases in hospital.
- St. John's Rehabilitation Hospital is closed to admissions, discharges and transfers.
- North York General Hospital is closed to admissions, visitors, discharges and transfers.
- Scarborough General Hospital is closed to admissions, visitors, discharges and transfers.
- All GTA hospitals are advised to institute heightened infection control procedures.
- There is no evidence of widespread public transmission of SARS and the current cases under investigation are linked to the original cluster of cases.

CURRENT CASE STATUS

(As of May 26, 2003)

Probable	144
Suspect	146
Cumulative total	290
Total current cases*	29
Healthcare workers	156
Discharged	211
Deaths	27

* = in hospital

AFFECTED HOSPITALS

- Individuals who were at the following facilities between the specified dates are being asked to self-isolate and call Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600:
 - North York General Hospital between May 13 and May 23.
 - St. John's Rehabilitation Hospital in Toronto between May 9 and May 22.
 - Scarborough General Hospital between May 12 and May 23.
- Those who were at St. John's Rehabilitation Hospital between May 1 and 8 should call Toronto Public Health and self-isolate if they have symptoms of SARS.
- Those who were at North York General Hospital between April 22 and May 12 should call Toronto Public Health and self-isolate if they have symptoms of SARS.

CONTACT INFORMATION

- Websites www.health.gov.on.ca, www.healthyontario.com
- Medical information hotline 1-866-212-2272
- Toronto Public Health 416-338-7600
- Telehealth Ontario 1-866-797-0000

Facility	Period	Action	Notes
North York General	May 13-23	Self-isolate, call Toronto Public Health	
North York General	April 22-May 12	Self-isolate, call Toronto Public Health	If SARS symptoms present
St. John's Rehab.	May 9-22	Self-isolate, call Toronto Public Health	
St. John's Rehab.	May 1-8	Self-isolate, call Toronto Public Health	If SARS symptoms present
Scarborough General	May 12-23	Self-isolate, call Toronto Public Health	

COMMUNICATIONS

- Press conferences with the Commissioner of Public Health, the Commissioner of Public Security and other medical experts continue to be held as needed.