

SARS Bulletin for Healthcare Providers

Ministry of Health &
Long-Term Care

*A newsletter for
Healthcare Providers*

Issue no. 13, May 27, 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.

DIRECTIVES

- 'New normal' directives were effective on May 16th and all health facilities and healthcare providers must comply with them.
- A notice was issued on May 26th, replacing the urgent notice to health and long-term care facilities and providers issued on May 23rd. This document details 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 has issued a travel advisory reminding Canadian travellers that the risk of acquiring SARS from travel to the Greater Toronto Area remains low.
- The World Health Organization has included Toronto as an area with recent local SARS transmission but indicates that "at present, WHO is not recommending any restrictions on travel to Toronto."
- The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has issued a travel advisory for Toronto, advising travellers to avoid settings such as health care facilities where SARS is most likely to be transmitted.

KEY SARS FACTS

- There are 7 active, probable cases related to the new cluster (reported on or after May 22nd).
- There are 28 cases in hospital.
- 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.

CUMULATIVE CASE STATUS

(As of May 27, 2003)

Suspect	144
Cumulative total	289
Total current cases*	28
Healthcare workers	156
Discharged	211
Deaths	27

* = in hospital

AFFECTED SITES

- St. John's Rehabilitation Hospital – closed to admissions, visitors, discharges and transfers.
- North York General Hospital – closed to admissions, visitors, discharges and transfers, including obstetrics.
- Scarborough General Hospital – is offering some services.

COMMUNICATIONS

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

CONTACT INFORMATION

- Websites www.health.gov.on.ca, www.healthyontario.com
- SARS operations centre 1-866-212-2272
- Toronto Public Health 416-338-7600
- Telehealth Ontario 1-866-797-0000
- SARS hotline (for public) 1-888-668-4636