



Renfrew County and District Health Unit
"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

For Immediate Release

(Pembroke, Ontario, March 25, 2020)

RCDHU Reports First Positive Case of COVID-19 in a resident of Renfrew County

Today, Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) confirms the first positive laboratory-confirmed case of novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) in the region. A woman in her 90s developed symptoms and was tested by Pembroke Regional Hospital (PRH) on March 23, 2020. She is currently an inpatient at PRH.

This individual is a resident of a local retirement home and has no recent history of travel.

All necessary precautions were followed to ensure the safety of the patient, the public, and the health care workers. The individual is currently on isolation at Pembroke Regional Hospital.

RCDHU is working with both the hospital and the retirement home to identify people who could have been exposed and will deliver specific instructions to these individuals on self-isolation and self-monitoring for symptoms.

RCDHU will assume close contacts are probable cases if they develop symptoms. A probable case is defined as:

- A person with a fever (over 38 degrees Celsius) and/or onset of (or exacerbation of chronic) cough AND any of the following within 14 days prior to onset of illness:
 - Travel to an impacted area **or**
 - Close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 **or**
 - Close contact with a person with acute respiratory illness who has been to an impacted area**AND**
 - In whom laboratory diagnosis of COVID-19 is not available, recommended, inconclusive, or negative.

"We know that confirmed cases represent only a fraction of disease activity in the community. For every 1 confirmed case there are probably 10 cases out in the community and quite possibly 100. The message is clear. COVID-19 is in Eastern Ontario and in Renfrew County," says Dr. Robert Cushman, Acting Medical Officer of Health, Renfrew County and District Health Unit.

RCDHU is reminding residents that the best way to prevent further spread and to reduce the risk of significant illness is to follow the social distancing instructions which include the following measures:

- Avoiding non-essential trips in the community.
- If you have to go into the community for an essential trip via taxi or rideshare, be sure to keep the windows down.
- Avoiding visits to Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, Supportive Housing, hospitals, Hospices and other congregate care settings unless the visit is absolutely essential.
- Talk to your supervisor, manager, or employer about the possibility of working from home.
- If you have meetings planned, consider doing them virtually instead of in person.
- Avoid sending children to daycare.
- Individuals should stay home unless necessary.
- If you spend time outside maintain a 2-metre distance from other people.

Additionally, practice the following measures to reduce the spread of germs including the novel coronavirus (COVID-19):

- Clean your hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then clean your hands.
- If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve and then clean your hands.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth, unless you have just cleaned your hands.
- If you are ill, stay home.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Get your flu shot.

If you think you may have COVID-19 symptoms or have been in close contact with someone who has it, first self-isolate and then use [Ontario's Self-Assessment Tool](#) to see if you need to seek further care.

If you need further assistance, call TeleHealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 or your health care provider. You can also call Renfrew County and District Health Unit at 613-735-8654.

Visit [Ontario's website](#) to learn more about how the province continues to protect Ontarians from COVID-1

For more information, visit the RCDHU website at <https://www.rcdhu.com/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-2/>, or for COVID-19 information for workplaces, visit: <https://www.rcdhu.com/covid-19-information-for-workplaces/>.

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