

March 17, 2020

In this issue:

- **Surveillance update: COVID-19**
- **State of Emergency Declared in Ontario**
- **New guidance from Chief Medical Officer of Health**
- **Scheduled and elective services at BCHS**
- **Case: Primary care phone contact determines positive as per case definition**
- **Working with community partners**

FROM:

David McNeil
President and CEO
Brant Community Healthcare System
AND
Dr. Elizabeth Urbantke
Acting Medical Officer of Health
Brant County Health Unit

Key messages:

- No lab confirmed COVID-19 cases locally
- A state of emergency has been declared in Ontario, with restrictions on social programs and large gatherings.
- Essential service workers not required to self-isolate for 14 days. Self-monitor and inform employer to ensure safe plan for return to work.
- BCHS is ramping down scheduled and elective services as per direction from

SURVEILLANCE UPDATE: COVID-19

As of 1030 on March 17, there are 185 COVID-19 cases in Ontario. There are no Lab confirmed cases in Brantford Brant. As of March 16, the Brant County Health Unit has been notified of 25 cases of COVID-19 in Brantford Brant that meet new case definition, with lab results pending.

GUIDANCE FROM CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

On March 16, the Chief Medical Officer of Health issued the following guidance:

- If you have travelled and are NOT a healthcare worker or essential service worker, self-isolate for 14 days.
- If you are essential service worker, you may return to work as long as asymptomatic. However, self-monitor for 14 days and identify to employer so plan can be put in place to protect workplace.

STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARED IN ONTARIO

On March 17, the Premier of Ontario declared a state of emergency for the province with the goal of protecting the health and safety of residents.

As a result, the following establishments are legally required to close immediately:

- All facilities providing indoor recreational programs;
- All public libraries;
- All private schools as defined in the Education Act;
- All licensed child care centres;
- All bars and restaurants, except to the extent that such facilities provide takeout food and delivery;
- All theatres including those offering live performances of music, dance, and other art forms, as well as cinemas that show movies; and
- Concert venues.

Further, public events of over 50 people are prohibited.

This announcement included \$304 million in funding to enhance the province's COVID-19 response.

Updates will be provided as more information is received.

The Brantford Brant Health Professionals Update is distributed to physician offices in the region.
Please reproduce copies for each physician in your practice.



Brantford Brant Health Professionals Update

March 17, 2020

SCHEDULED AND ELECTIVE SERVICES AT BCHS

In the coming days, BCHS will be reducing scheduled and elective services and outpatient activity as much as possible to generate capacity for potential COVID-19 cases.

This is following direction of the Ministry of Health and Ontario's Chief Public Health Officer.

Patients will be notified starting March 17 and be contacted when their visit can be rescheduled.

CASE: PRIMARY CARE PHONE CONTACT DETERMINES POSITIVE CASE DEFINITION

*Sample case study to assist with clinical practice.

FYI – The Ministry of Health has launched a new self-assessment tool:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-self-assessment>

Patients are being instructed to contact their primary care provider OR Telehealth Ontario if screened as positive on self-assessment.

If primary care screens patient as positive over phone:

- Ask to self-isolate
- If you have appropriate PPE and testing supplies, please test in your office
- If you do not have PPE or testing supplies, a physician, NP or PA should do a phone/virtual assessment.

If phone assessment meets the case definition:

- Primary care provider to contact BCHU to report
- BCHU does not do clinical assessments
- If patient is unwell enough and requires physical assessment, refer to BCHS COVID-19 Assessment Clinic (call ahead to 519-751-5818)

WORKING WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS

BCHS and BCHU will be working closely with community partners on responding to COVID-19. A coordinated request for PPE supplies as well as human resource planning to support decanting from hospital to community and long-term care have been prioritized in the short term.

Primary care practices are represented by co-chairs of Brantford Brant Primary Care Council:

<http://brantohr.ca/primarycare/>

MORE INFORMATION

The Brant County Health Unit updates information regularly for health care providers on their website:

<https://www.bchu.org/healthpro-coronavirus>

The Health Unit has also set up healthcare provider specific line for COVID-19 related questions or concerns. This line can be reached by calling (519) 753-4937 and then dialing ext. 468. Please do not share this extension with the public as it is meant to exclusively serve healthcare providers.

The Brant Community Healthcare system is updating information regularly on its website:

<https://www.bchsys.org/en/covid-19.aspx>

The Brantford Brant Health Professionals Update is distributed to physician offices in the region.

Please reproduce copies for each physician in your practice.