

MEDIA RELEASE

Seventh Case of COVID-19 in the Porcupine Health Unit Area



For Immediate Release — Friday, March 27, 2020

Cochrane, Ontario — Today, Dr. Lianne Catton, Medical Officer of Health of the Porcupine Health Unit (PHU), is reporting that a male in his thirties is the seventh positive case of COVID-19 in the PHU area. Dr. Catton said, “At this time, there are no links to either international travel or contact with other any other case. Therefore, we are considering this case to be a sign of local transmission. The COVID-19 Operations Team at the PHU is continuing to follow-up.”

The male presented himself to the Emergency Department at Lady Minto Hospital, on Sunday, March 22, where he was assessed and tested. Lady Minto Hospital medical staff took all appropriate precautions, according to Dr. Catton. The case has followed public health guidance and remains stable, at home and in self-isolation.

Dr. Catton stresses, “The nature of this case reflects the reality that COVID-19 is circulating in our area. Who has it, where that person has been, and what he or she has been doing is less important than all of us taking preventive measures to reduce the spread.” These include physical distancing — keeping at least 2 metres or 6 feet distance — between yourself and others. She adds, “Everyone, not just travellers, please stay home if you’re feeling ill. Even if this feels like just a cold. You can help keep someone else from getting more seriously ill.”

The PHU conducts case and contact management with all cases to help identify anyone who may be a close contact. If you are considered a close contact of any COVID-19 case, Dr. Catton says you will be called by PHU staff and provided with follow-up and direction. The health unit will also share information with the public if there is potential exposure of community members that requires any follow-up, as appropriate. However, confidentiality and privacy remain a priority.

Although this case has so far shown no link to international travel, Dr. Catton emphasizes that travellers play a key role in controlling the spread of COVID-19. “If you’re coming back from an international destination, we want to say, ‘Welcome home and stay home.’ Do not stop at grocery stores or the pharmacy. Get home quickly, self-isolate at home for 14 days and limit your contact with others.” She adds, “We expect to see more cases, but we can slow down the spread if everyone stays home as much as possible. If you must go out, plan your errands to minimize the contact you have with other people. That’s the best way to control the spread of COVID-19. We’re all in this together. Let’s all do our part.”

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Kapuskasing, Matheson,
Moosonee, Smooth Rock Falls

The Porcupine Health Unit is located in Northeastern Ontario, serving the entire Cochrane District and Hornepayne, in Algoma District. The main office is located in Timmins, Ontario, with branch offices in Cochrane, Hearst, Hornepayne, Iroquois Falls, Kapuskasing, Matheson, Moosonee and Smooth Rock Falls.

Visit [Ontario's website](#) to learn more about how the province continues to protect Ontarians from COVID-19.

The Porcupine Health Unit COVID-19 Information Line

- If you are experiencing fever, dry cough and/or shortness of breath, call the PHU COVID-19 Info Line at 1-800-461-1818 extension 2919.
- Available Monday to Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm
- Callers can leave messages and PHU staff will call back within 24 hours.
- At times, call volumes are high, and your patience is appreciated.

COVID-19 Assessment Centre: Intrepid Place in Timmins

- Further assessment and testing.
- Referrals by health care providers required.
- By appointment only. Walk-ins will not be seen.
- Not everyone who attends the clinic will be tested.

Prevention Measures

Take the necessary precautions to protect yourself and others to reduce the spread of COVID-19:

- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer often
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth
- Cough into your sleeve or tissue
- Stay home if you are sick
- Practice physical distancing – stay home as much as possible, limit visitors to your home.
- Do your best to keep at least two metres away from others

Symptoms of COVID-19

- Fever, cough and difficulty breathing
- Complications can include serious conditions, like pneumonia or kidney failure, and in some cases, death.

IMPORTANT: 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 the Porcupine Health Unit at 705-267-1181 or toll-free 1-800-461-1818.
- Be sure to mention your symptoms and your travel history, including the countries you visited.

- If you are ill and must visit a health care professional, call ahead and tell them if you have a respiratory illness.
- If you need immediate medical attention, call 911 and mention your travel history and symptoms.

For further information, please contact:

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