

HURON PERTH HEALTHCARE ALLIANCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 27, 2020



Screening Precautions for Novel Coronavirus

The new strain of coronavirus, currently making headlines across the world, is called Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCov). Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses ranging from the common cold to much more serious diseases, such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), or Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV). While the risk in our region is low at this point, the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance (HPHA) is taking precautions which include proactively screening patients at all four of our hospital sites.

What does that mean for you? On arrival to any one of our hospital sites, patients will be asked:

- About their symptoms, particularly respiratory symptoms.
- Whether they have traveled to Wuhan, China.
- If they have come in contact with someone who has or is suspected of having coronavirus.

If they are at risk of possibly having the virus, they will be asked to clean their hands, put on a mask and be taken to a special isolation room until a diagnosis can be confirmed.

As always, but even more so with so many viruses circulating in our community, the importance of hand hygiene cannot be stressed enough. Please clean your hands frequently - on arrival to the hospital, before entering a patient's room (if you're visiting), upon exiting a patient's room, when leaving the hospital, and any number of times in between.

Other ways to protect yourself include avoiding contact with people who are sick and practising proper cough and sneeze etiquette.

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Put your used tissue in a waste basket.
- If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze in your upper sleeve, not your hands. Wash your hands after coughing or sneezing.

Please remember, if you are feeling unwell, do not visit patients in the hospital.

For more information about Novel Coronavirus, you can visit [the Ontario Health website](#).

-30



For more information please contact:

Debbie Turner
Director Quality & Risk
519-272-8210 extension 2324
debbie.turner@hpha.ca