

HURON PERTH HEALTHCARE ALLIANCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gastrointestinal Outbreak Declared

HPHA Confirms Gastrointestinal Outbreak at St. Marys Memorial Hospital

The Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance (HPHA) – St. Marys Memorial Hospital Site has declared a gastrointestinal (gastro) outbreak on the Inpatient Unit.

“In response to the outbreak, we are reminding everyone to clean their hands upon entering and exiting the hospital, patient care areas and patient rooms,” says Andrew Williams, HPHA President & CEO. “Hand washing is key to stopping the spread of bacteria.”

Gastro, also known as the stomach flu, causes an infection in the stomach and intestines called gastroenteritis. This infection is not caused by the influenza virus.

“Most individuals with gastro infection will experience one to three days of nausea, vomiting, and watery diarrhea,” says Janice McIntyre, Infection Control Practitioner. “Other symptoms may include fever, headache, and stomach cramps.”

Gastro infections have been linked to outbreaks of vomiting and/or diarrhea in day nurseries, schools, long term care homes, cruise ships, camps, dormitories, restaurants, households and other places where people gather in groups. A person who is ill with a gastro infection is most often able to spread the virus 48 hours before they show any symptoms and up to 48 hours after the symptoms subside.

Those visiting patients at the hospital are required to follow any posted instructions and are asked to limit their interaction to one patient per visit. Those visiting infected patients will be required to wear gloves and gowns and must use the hand sanitizer provided to wash their hands upon leaving the patient’s room. Patients with symptoms are being isolated and common areas have been restricted.

“We are working with the Perth District Health Unit to take all possible steps to stop the transmission of the virus, prevent any further infection, maintain bed availability and provide the best care to our patients,” adds Williams.

Visitors are also reminded that if they aren’t feeling well, they should postpone their visit to at least 48 hours after symptoms clear.



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