

MEDIA RELEASE

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



For Immediate Release — Wednesday, March 25, 2020

Cochrane, Ontario — Today, Dr. Lianne Catton, Medical Officer of Health of the Porcupine Health Unit (PHU), is reporting that a female in her 50's the sixth positive case of COVID-19 in the PHU area and first outside of Timmins. Dr. Catton said, "We believe the case is linked to both international travel and contact with other another case we were investigating. The COVID-19 Operations Team at the PHU is continuing to follow-up."

The female presented herself to the Emergency Department at Lady Minto, on Saturday, March 21, where she 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 remained in self-isolation. She is currently admitted and in hospital in stable condition.

Paul Chatelain, CEO of Lady Minto Hospital, said that the hospital was ready for their first case. "We expected that COVID-19 would be circulating in the area, and that it was likely we would have a case," he said. "All staff were thoroughly prepared and ready to respond as per all Ministry guidelines and protocols." This case further emphasizes the need to ensure only those acutely unwell presents to the emergency department. It is important to preserve acute care capacity.

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.

At this time, Dr. Catton says, the most important action the public can take is to continue physical distancing. "Keeping 2 metres, that's 6 feet, between yourself and others can help reduce the spread of COVID-19 in all our communities." Travellers have to take extra precautions, she emphasizes, "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 can expect to see more cases. That's why need we need everyone to stay home as much as possible and plan any outings to minimize the contact you have

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with other people. That's the best way to control the spread of COVID-19.”

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 suspect you have symptoms of COVID-19

- 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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