

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Physicians and Nurse Practitioners
FROM: Dr. Heather Morrison, Chief Public Health Officer
Dr. Greg German, Medical Microbiologist
DATE: March 23, 2020
SUBJECT: Testing Guidance and Rationale for COVID-19 **Effective: 23-March-2020 – March 30-2020**

Over the past number of weeks, the guidance in the country and in PEI regarding the COVID-19 has evolved. Initially, the recommendation was to test only those returning from Wuhan, China, and then Hubei province, China who presented with symptoms of cough and/or fever. These testing criteria then expanded to include, Iran, Italy, and finally those returning from any international travel. This has been a very quick transition for all of us.

A recent review indicates that PEI's testing strategy is in line with the draft National Laboratory Testing Strategy, which recognizes that groups targeted for testing within a Province/Territory are dependent upon current local epidemiology and the current focus of the response objectives. To date, PEI does not have evidence of community transmission. Thus, our priority is for active case finding and rapid detection to contain transmission chains. Of course, PEI's approach to testing continues to evolve with the changing COVID-19 situation. Please see the next page for the categories for testing. We hope to have in-province testing capabilities soon.

If a patient presents at the ER, is assessed by the physician and COVID-19 testing is required, testing should be done at the ER to minimize travel and exposures. If a patient presents to an office or ER with mild symptoms and does not need to be seen immediately by a physician, patients can be re-directed to 811.

Testing clinics are available for the community in Charlottetown and Summerside. If you have mild symptoms and think you need to be tested, perform the self-assessment tool on-line and if you need testing, call 811. For those with more severe illness, testing will be performed in the ERs/acute setting for clients who require those services.

Thank you for your hard work and dedication during these challenging times.

Dr. Heather Morrison

Dr. Greg German

For the following week, the following criteria for screening are recommended:

Testing Group
<p>A person with any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever (≥ 38.0 degrees Celsius) • Cough (new or exacerbated chronic) • Sore throat • Runny nose • Marked fatigue <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traveled outside of Canada within the past 14 days, • OR (as of March 21, 2020) traveled outside of PEI <p>This includes symptomatic travellers identified at a point of entry to PEI BUT: do not test more than 2 family members per household (in order to conserve supplies).</p>
<p>A person with any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever (≥ 38.0 degrees Celsius) • Cough (new or exacerbated chronic) • Sore throat • Runny nose • Marked fatigue <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Had close contact with a confirmed case or a person with symptoms and travel history (i.e., person under investigation) <p>BUT: do not test more than 2 family members per household (in order to conserve supplies).</p>
<p>A person with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever (≥ 38.0 degrees Celsius) AND • Cough (new or exacerbated chronic) AND with one or more of the following: • Sore throat • Joint pain • Muscle aches • Fatigue <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is admitted to hospital
<p>A person with any respiratory symptoms AND Is admitted to intensive care unit BUT Has not been tested for COVID-19 in the past 48 hours</p>
<p>Health Care Workers with any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever (≥ 38.0 degrees Celsius) • Cough (new or exacerbated chronic)

For Inpatient COVID-19 testing questions: Please contact Dr. Greg German, Medical Microbiologist for further direction.

For Outpatient and ER COVID-19 testing questions: Please contact Dr. Heather Morrison, Chief Public Health Officer for direction.