

**Yukon Communicable Disease Control
#4 Hospital Road, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 3H8**

Memorandum

Date: 2020-07-31

20-15

To: All Health Care Providers

From: Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) & Yukon Communicable Disease Control (YCDC)

Subject: COVID-19 Provider Update #13

Dear Colleagues,

As we continue to watch closely the evolving epidemiology of COVID-19 within Canada and globally, particularly some of the recent activity in regions as close as Interior BC and Alaska, we would like to share a few thoughts and recommendations.

Much of the recent COVID activity in Canada or in the US relates to people in close settings ignoring physical distancing --whether indoors or outdoors-- as people seek some much needed summer recreation and turn to bars, nightclubs and private parties as places to mingle. Unfortunately, this increased social activity has resulted in spikes in cases.

We would like to remind all health care professionals of your role in protecting yourselves against infection, both in and out of the workplace. You also play a key role as reliable sources of advice for your patients, including educating patients about how to take care of themselves and their families by practicing hand hygiene, safe physical distance and staying home and away from others when sick.

As expected, there has been an increase in COVID-19 tests in Yukon. At this point, we encourage testing when there is a clinical suspicion of COVID-19, even when presentations are mild or suspicions are low, to help us find and isolate every case. As reminders:

- **All tests must be reported to YCDC.**
- Patients hospitalized with pneumonia or severe acute respiratory disease are recommended to be tested for COVID using both an NP and a sputum sample.

- See current [Testing recommendations \(June 15, 2020\)](#) for further information.

Please travel wisely. Remember that you are not only a role model for behaviour, but you are a potential introducer of COVID-19 into facilities or gatherings. Be aware of COVID-19 risks wherever you travel, and ensure that when back in Yukon, that you are doing your part to minimize the risk of COVID-19 introduction.

Whether or not you have travelled, it is key that providers are not going to work sick. Providers with any symptoms of COVID-19 or other communicable diseases should seek care. If additional advice is required if you become sick or regarding working after travel or close household members become sick, please contact:

- Physicians: contact Dr. Sherilynne Himmelsbach (867) 332-3740
- All other providers: contact your supervisor/management team

We are working with Yukon Hospital Corporation to assist out-of-territory visitors in their exemption to visit their family members (palliative/end-of-life). Family members requesting visitation who are not from the BC Bubble and currently under self-isolation due to travel require both a self-isolation exemption and facility authorization. Please note, the self-isolation exemption **only** allows for the family member to leave their location to visit this family member.

Family members who are seeking an exemption should be directed to complete a self-isolation exemption application and to contact the patient's facility directly for their most current policy. The application can be found here:

- <https://yukon.ca/en/health-and-wellness/covid-19-information/your-health-covid-19/application-alternative-self-isolation-plan>
- For other urgent concerns or questions, please contact the MOH on-call or Colleen Kovach at colleen.kovach@gov.yk.ca

The following clinical guidance documents have been developed/updated:

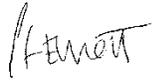
- **Referral for Evaluation of Patients in Whitehorse with COVID-19 Symptoms (NEW)**
 - Tool to support providers in Whitehorse identify where and when to direct clients
- **Guidance for Community Health Centres in Rural Yukon (UPDATED) July 27, 2020**
 - Additional recommendations to support application of existing infection control and prevention measures and supports for clinical visits with ILI/COVID-19 patients

Thank you as always for your support and collaboration in this pandemic response. If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know.

Thank you,



Brendan E. Hanley MD CCFP(EM)
MPH
Chief Medical Officer of Health for
Yukon
204 Lambert St, Whitehorse, YT
Ph 867 456-6136 cell: 867-332-
1160



Catherine Elliott MD MHS Sc FRCPC
Deputy Chief Medical Officer of Health for
Yukon
304 Jarvis St, 2nd Floor, Whitehorse, YT
Cell. (867) 335-0546 / Fax. (867) 667-
8349



Lori Strudwick MN RN
Clinical Manager, YCDC
#4 Hospital Rd, Whitehorse, YT
Ph (867) 667 8178 / Fax. (867)
667-8349