



News Release

Bluewater Health and Lambton Public Health Confirm

First Patients of COVID-19 in Sarnia Lambton

SARNIA & PETROLIA – March 25, 2020 – Lambton Public Health and Bluewater Health have confirmed the first cases of COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) in Sarnia-Lambton.

The affected five individuals are currently in-hospital and are all persons over the age of 60. Each person presented at Bluewater Health's Emergency Department, where they were safely screened and tested for the illness. The patients are isolated in the hospital safely and all hospital infection control protocols were followed and well-managed by the healthcare team.

Bluewater Health's infection prevention and control protocols are in place at all times and are currently heightened with screening points for all patients, visitors, staff and physicians. Individuals are reminded to please continue to monitor their own health, practice proper hand hygiene often, avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth and to practice social distancing.

Lambton Public Health is in the process of following up with a small number of close contacts of the individuals. The investigation is ongoing.

To reduce the community spread of COVID-19:

- Limit the number of people you come into close contact with
- Avoid crowds and change the time that you go if you find a store to be very crowded.
- Discuss work from home or modified shift arrangements with your employer.
- Avoid non-essential trips and interactions in the community.
- Frequently practice good personal hygiene - wash your hands, cover your cough and sneeze, and avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth unless you have just cleaned your hands. Disinfect surfaces you frequently touch.
- Stay home if you are sick.

For those who are concerned that they may be experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, considerations include:

- If you develop mild symptoms such as a fever or cough, move to self-isolation at home and rest.
- If your symptoms become more severe and you need to seek medical attention call your healthcare provider for assessment, or call Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000.
- For extremely severe symptoms call 911 or visit the Emergency Department.

The guidance for COVID-19 testing no longer considers country of travel; instead it focuses on prioritization of those at highest risk.

COVID-19 testing is only available under limited circumstances, due to limited supply of tests. Therefore, COVID-19 testing is no longer appropriate for the general population, and testing will be prioritized based on critical illness and business continuity needs for essential service providers.

An initial COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool has been posted to the Ministry of Health website. Individuals who suspect they have COVID-19 can consult this tool to determine whether and how to seek further care. LambtonPublicHealth.ca provides local access to information about COVID-19 including the current situation and resources to support the community.

Joint planning for COVID-19 has been underway for several months now and has heightened since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020. Since then, Bluewater Health has implemented visitor restrictions, entrance restrictions, screening points and several measures to protect staff and physicians within the hospital's daily operations at both sites.

Bluewater Health, with locations in Sarnia and Petrolia, cares for the residents of Sarnia-Lambton. With close to 2,500 staff, Professional Staff and volunteers, Bluewater Health provides an array of specialized acute, complex continuing care, allied health and ambulatory care services. Bluewater Health's Mission is: We create exemplary healthcare experiences with patients and families every time. For more information about Bluewater Health, visit www.bluewaterhealth.ca or follow us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube.

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