



## **HPEPH Collaborating with Ontario Health Agencies to Monitor Coronavirus Presence in Province**

**Hastings and Prince Edward Counties / January 27, 2020** – Hastings Prince Edward Public Health (HPEPH) is collaborating with Public Health Ontario, Ministry of Health and local health authorities to closely monitor and respond to the current outbreak of a new virus (the 2019-Novel Coronavirus, or 2019-nCoV) not previously seen in humans.

The situation is evolving rapidly with cases of 2019-nCoV being reported outside of Wuhan, China where it originated. As of today, a husband and wife who recently returned to Toronto from Wuhan, China have both tested positive for the new coronavirus through the Ontario Public Health Laboratory.

The federal government has implemented additional health screening at airports to prevent the introduction into, and limit the potential spread of, the 2019 Novel Coronavirus in Canada.

Medical Officer of Health, Dr Piotr Oglaza states “The risk to Ontarians, and the community of Hastings and Prince Edward Counties remains low at this time. However, steps are in place to immediately detect and respond to any potential cases in our area”. Physicians, hospitals and other health care facilities are required to report a person under investigation for the new coronavirus to their local medical officer of health. HPEPH will work closely with Quinte Healthcare and community healthcare providers to quickly and effectively take all necessary steps to investigate, arrange for lab tests and do case and contact management to prevent and control spread of infection.

Symptoms of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus are similar to many other respiratory illnesses which include fever, cough and respiratory symptoms such as shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. Anyone who has recently travelled to Wuhan, in the Hubei Province of China, should monitor themselves for respiratory symptoms for 14 days following their return to Canada. Contact Public Health for direction if you have traveled to Wuhan and become ill with mild respiratory symptoms. Travellers who become ill during, or soon after, their travels to Wuhan with severe respiratory symptoms such as fever, cough and difficulty breathing should go to their local emergency department. Immediately inform staff at the emergency department if you are ill and have recently returned from travel to Wuhan.

Hastings Prince Edward Public Health would like to remind our community of the key ways to prevent the spread of infection:

- Wash your hands frequently
- Cough and sneeze into the bend of your arm, not into your hand(s)
- Avoid touching your nose, mouth or eyes with your hands
- Clean objects and surfaces that many people touch, such as: doorknobs, phones, light switches and television remotes

- Eat healthy foods and stay physically active to keep your immune system strong
- Get plenty of rest or sleep
- Get your influenza vaccine
- Stay home when you are sick, and avoid contact with other people until your symptoms are gone
- If you suspect you are sick, avoid visiting people in Long-Term Care, or individuals with health concerns

HPEPH is committed to providing up-to-date information and guidance to our health care providers and local community. Current information on the 2019 Novel Coronavirus is available on our public health website and through the Ministry of Health at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov>. For more information, please visit our website, [hpePublicHealth.ca](http://hpePublicHealth.ca), or contact us at 613-966-5500.

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**Media Contact:**

Emily Tubbs, Communications Specialist  
613-966-5500 x 464 or 613-966-9418  
[etubbs@hpeph.ca](mailto:etubbs@hpeph.ca)

**About Hastings Prince Edward Public Health**

Hastings Prince Edward Public Health (HPEPH) is a public health agency that serves the counties of Hastings and Prince Edward from four local offices. We monitor the health of our local population, deliver programs and services within our communities, and help develop healthy public policies. We provide information and support in many areas to help improve the health and well-being of our residents. Together with our communities, we help people become as healthy as they can be. For more information, please visit [hpePublicHealth.ca](http://hpePublicHealth.ca). You can also find us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter.