

COVID-19 DAILY SITUATION REPORT



Thunder Bay Regional
Health Sciences
Centre

Friday, March 27, 2020

The first positive case of COVID-19 has been confirmed in our community. The person is being monitored by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit and is safely isolating at home. Due to travel history, this case does not represent community spread. It does, however, reinforce the need for community members to stay at home and practice physical distancing.

This case demonstrates that the system in place works. The person self-isolated after returning home from travel. When symptoms arose, they called Public Health and were screened over the phone. Based on symptoms and history, the person was directed to visit the COVID-19 Assessment Centre for further screening, was ultimately tested, and returned home to continue self-isolation. This is the processes everyone must follow.

This development was not unexpected. We recognize that a confirmed COVID-19 case in our community raises fear and anxiety among staff, professional staff, patients and the community. It is only a matter of time before a confirmed case is admitted to our Hospital. The hard work completed over the past weeks to implement our Hospital's pandemic plan has prepared us for this moment.

Our community needs us. We prepared as a team and we will persevere as a team.

The expertise and professionalism of Hospital leadership, staff and professional staff is truly remarkable. Protecting everyone's health and safety remains our utmost priority. Thank you for continuing to provide safe, quality health care to our patients, families and community.

Staff members are reminded that the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) is a support resource that can be accessed by calling 623-7677.

Our Hospital has treated several presumptive COVID-19 cases. A presumptive case means that a patient who needs care has symptoms that are suspected of being related to or caused by COVID-19. Any such patient is tested for COVID-19, and, until tests results are returned negative, safety precautions, such as appropriate use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and isolating the patient, are taken as care is provided. Not all patients who are isolated are presumed to have COVID-19. There are many reasons as to why a patient may require isolation.

As of yesterday, March 26, 229 people have been seen at our COVID-19 Assessment Centre. A total of 202 people have been tested at the Assessment Centre and in our Hospital.

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PPE must be appropriately used to protect staff, professional staff and patients from the spread of infection. We have PPE supplies to meet and maintain current needs now. We are taking measures to ensure adequate supply of PPE is available to treat COVID-19 presumed and actual cases. We aim to be prepared for the worst-case scenario. PPE is a matter the Incident Management Team discusses daily, with extreme seriousness.

In addition to orders for N95 and surgical masks, our Hospital has placed an order for 10,000+ cloth masks for staff use. These are expected to arrive in early April. Cloth masks that meet strict specifications are not for use in direct patient care, but do provide protection similar to surgical masks. They are useful because they help to prevent the touching of mouth and nose and provide some droplet protection. The cloth masks do not replace N95 masks and staff using them are to remove cloth masks before delivering patient care. Updated information regarding PPE use and supply will be provided regularly.

As of this morning, further visitor restrictions were implemented at our Hospital. For the enhanced protection of patients and their families, staff and professional staff, only Essential Care Partners are allowed. This measure is difficult for patients, and also emotionally challenging for clinical staff and leaders to enforce. Compassion is what we do. It is who we are. Doing the right thing, in this new reality, is taxing. Thank you for your strength.

In light of the current situation and for the protection of all, the Retirement Dinner scheduled in May to celebrate those who retired in 2019 will be postponed to a later date. The well-earned evening of appreciation will be rescheduled when it is safe to do so.

For questions about COVID-19 testing criteria, please contact the TBDHU's Infectious Disease Program at 807-625-5900 or toll free at 1-888-294-6630.

Local COVID-19 case status: <https://www.tbdhu.com/coronavirus>

Provincial COVID-19 case status: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus#section-0>

Canada COVID-19 case status: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>

COVID-19 Daily Situation Report videos: <http://tbrhsc.net/covid-19-information>

All Hospital COVID-19 updates are available on the iNtranet at <https://comms.tbrhsc.net/covid-19-information/>