



**Office of the  
Chief Medical  
Health Officer**

February 3, 2020

**Novel Coronavirus "2019-nCoV" – Update #2**

Island Health Medical Health Officers and multiple health partners continue to monitor the evolving coronavirus situation (named 2019-nCoV) which originated in Wuhan, China. At this time, the risk to Canadians continues to be low. The situation is evolving rapidly and the screening and testing criteria are expected to change over time.

**2019-nCoV Testing Update from the BCCDC Public Health Laboratory (PHL)**

Diagnostic testing for 2019-nCoV is available at the BCCDC Public Health Laboratory (PHL) and will be available in the coming weeks at front line health authority laboratories.

Please *immediately contact your local Medical Health officer for patients of concern* including those with:

- compatible symptoms of nCoV infection (e.g. fever, cough, or difficulty breathing)
- AND history of travel to **affected areas of China (expanded from Hubei province to include mainland China, Taiwan, and the island administrative areas such as Hong Kong, Macau)** within two weeks prior to illness onset OR other index of suspicion (e.g. contact with an ill person with such travel history).

A Medical Health Officer is available 24/7 for guidance on appropriate testing and precautions. We can be reached during business hours (see phone numbers on left side of page) or after-hours at 1-800-204-6166.

**Patient Management & Specimen Collection**

For patients meeting the above criteria:

- Offer them a surgical mask and place them in a separate room.
- Use contact and droplet precautions during sample collection. This includes gloves, gowns, surgical mask and eye protection. An N95 respirator is NOT necessary.
- Obtain a nasopharyngeal and/or viral throat swab using a red or blue topped COPAN swab with Universal Transport Media (UTM). It is preferable to collect specimens from both sites. These are the same collection devices routinely used for NP swabs for flu/other respiratory virus testing or skin/mucosal swabs for HSV/VZV viral testing. UNSUITABLE collection devices systems will be REJECTED and delay testing. These include: COPAN E-swabs for Pertussis testing, bacterial throat swabs for Group A Streptococcus testing, dry swabs, etc.
- Ensure samples are promptly sent to an Island Health lab. Samples sent to Life Labs will significantly increase turnaround time for results at this time. All samples are currently tested at the Public Health Laboratory.
- If the patient is well enough to return home, they may be discharged with a surgical mask and advised to isolate at home until contacted by Island Health Communicable Disease.

**BCCDC Health Provider information updates and laboratory testing information are available at:**

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/coronavirus-%28novel%29>

**NORTH ISLAND  
250.331.8591**

Charmaine Enns MD MHSc FRCPC  
355-11th Street  
Courtenay, BC V9N 1S4

**CENTRAL ISLAND  
250.739.6304**

Paul Hasselback MD MSc FRCPC  
3rd Floor, 6475 Metral Drive  
Nanaimo, BC V9T 2L9

**COWICHAN  
REGION  
250.850.2100 x45528**

Shannon Waters MD MHSc FRCPC  
675 Canada Avenue  
Duncan, BC V9L 1T9

**SOUTH ISLAND  
250.519.3406**

Richard Stanwick, CMHO  
MD MSc FRCPC FAAP

Murray Fyfe MD MSc FRCPC

Dee Hoyano MD FRCPC CCFP

430-1900 Richmond Avenue  
Victoria, BC V8R 4R2

**After Hours On Call  
1.800.204.6166**

Dee Hoyano, MD, FRCPC  
Medical Health Officer