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# MEMO

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**Date:** February 26, 2020

**To:** Health care providers

**From:** Dr. Brent Roussin  
Chief Provincial Public Health Officer  
Lanette Siragusa, Provincial Lead,  
Health System Integration & Quality,  
Chief Nursing Officer, Shared Health

**Subject:** COVID-19 UPDATE – Symptomatic Patients Returning from listed countries should be tested for COVID-19, consultation with Infectious Disease is NOT required for these patients

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The number of cases of COVID-19 is increasing outside China as the outbreak continues to evolve. This is an emerging, rapidly evolving situation. Manitoba public health officials continue to monitor, gather information, assess risk and recommend evidence-based approaches for healthcare providers and precautions for returning travelers.

At this time, the risk associated with COVID-19 in Canada is low. For Canadians traveling abroad, the risk associated with COVID-19 is also low however, it will vary depending on destination and travel itinerary. All international travelers should be advised to monitor themselves for symptoms for 14 days from their return to Canada.

The list of countries experiencing community transmission of respiratory illness caused by COVID-19 will be updated regularly as this situation continues to evolve.

Changes in recommended approach will be communicated and available at:  
<https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/coronavirus/index.html>.

**As of February 26, 2020, all symptomatic patients who have returned from the following countries within the last 14 days, should be tested for COVID-19:**

- China
- Japan
- Hong Kong
- Iran
- Italy
- Singapore
- South Korea
- Taiwan
- Thailand
- Vietnam

The relevant travel history and symptoms must be included on the accompanying Cadham Provincial Laboratory (CPL) requisition. The Infectious Diseases (ID) physician on-call &/or CPL physician on-call does not need to be notified. Individuals that are sent home pending results should be advised to self-isolate.

Symptomatic patients who have travelled internationally to countries not listed above may

require laboratory testing for COVID-19. For a complete list of countries who have reported COVID-19 cases, refer to the Johns Hopkins website:

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6>

Collect a detailed travel &/or exposure history and consult the ID physician on-call &/or the CPL physician on-call if COVID-19 testing is being considered.

Health care providers are reminded to:

- **Collect a detailed travel history from ALL symptomatic patients** (i.e. persons experiencing cold or flu-like symptoms).
- **Implement droplet/contact precautions for ALL patients presenting with respiratory symptoms consistent with respiratory infections.** This includes advising symptomatic patients and accompanying people (even if asymptomatic) to wear a procedure or surgical mask, and place patients who screen positive in a designated separate waiting area/space (maintain 2-metre separation).
- **Fill laboratory requisitions completely.** CPL requisitions requesting COVID-19 testing that do not include the relevant travel history and symptoms may be rejected.

**Contact Information for:**

- Infectious Diseases physician on-call: 204-787-2071
- Medical Officer of Health (MOH) on on-call: 204-788-8666
- Cadham Provincial Laboratory physician on-call: 204-787-2071