

Internal Memo

Date: Friday March 13, 2020

To: Everyone at HHS

From: Rob MacIsaac, President and CEO

Subject: **Update – COVID-19 self-monitoring and international travel directive**

HHS has activated its incident management System (IMS) structure to advance and heighten our efforts to manage COVID-19, this includes addressing the issues of staff and physician self-monitoring and travel.

What's new

- Anyone considering travel should be aware of the direction provided by the federal government on March 13, which recommends that all travelers arriving in Canada from outside the country, consider self-isolation for 14 days upon return as a precaution.
- All work related travel outside of Canada must be delayed or cancelled. Please speak directly with your leader or Chief to discuss your situation.
- Questions related to international travel, employee self-isolation and COVID-19 related health concerns can be addressed to: COVIDFORMS@HHSC.CA .

Recommendation on travel

March is a time when many healthcare workers have personal travel planned. everyone should be aware of the following:

- International travel is **strongly discouraged** and may result in your inability to return to work.
 - You should know that you could be quarantined in another country or upon
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your return to Canada and unable to work during that period.

- Consult the federal government's [travel advisories](#).

What you need to do – reporting all travel outside Canada

Before You Travel:

- Anyone planning to travel outside of Canada is required to notify EHS in advance. Please report all travel outside of Canada to Employee Health Services using the [Travel Registration Form](#).
- If you have specific questions, please contact the Staff Travel Hotline at ext. 42200 (905-521-2100, ext. 42200).

When You Return:

- Upon your return, please notify EHS before returning to work
Phone: HGH: 46307; JHCC: 42314; MUMC: 75573; SPH: 12204; WLMH: 11211; King West: 42314
 - If you have no symptoms, EHS will direct you to self-monitor for respiratory infection symptoms (respiratory symptoms, fever, cough etc.) and take your temperature twice daily for 14 days.
 - If you have symptoms, **do not return to work** - call Public Health for direction. Then call EHS to let HHS know what direction you have been given.

What you need to do – self-monitoring

HHS asks that all healthcare workers take action to ensure the safety of patients and colleagues in the workplace:

- In order to reduce the spread of illness, everyone should self-monitor for illness and stay home if they are experiencing:
 - New or evolving/worsening cough
 - Shortness of breath
 - Fever of 38 degrees & higher
 - If staff stay home sick, they need to report this to their leader, as well as Employee Health Services (EHS).
 - Physicians should notify their Department Chief/Head of Service.
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- Learn more about [self-monitoring](#).

What you need to do – self-isolation

Those who have returned **from China, Iran, Italy or South Korea in** the last 14 days must self-isolate (NOTE: this list could change at any time). If returning from any other international travel, consider self-isolation which means:

- **Stay at home** and avoid close contact with others, including anyone in their household, for a total of 14 days from the date they returned to Canada
- Contact their local Public Health Unit within 24 hours of arriving in Canada;
(*Hamilton Public Health Unit 905 546-2424 ext 7970*)
- Contact Employee Health Services to report your travel
- Learn more about [self-isolation tips](#).

What HHS will do to support those in self-isolation

HHS supports the total wellness of our employees. This means:

- HHS will continue to pay staff wages during government-mandated self-isolation
- This applies to any pre-scheduled shifts/hours during the period of self-isolation.
- This practice will be monitored and may be adjusted over time.
- Employees will be required to provide evidence of international travel.
- In the event that an employee becomes ill, any resulting absences will be treated in accordance with HHS guidelines and collective agreements.

I want to thank all of you for your collaboration in keeping our colleagues and patients safe in these challenging circumstances.
