

Ministry of Health

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Ministère de la Santé

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May 1, 2020

TO: Medical Officers of Health
Associate Medical Officers of Health

FROM: Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health

RE: COVID-19 testing in Long-Term Care and Licensed Child Care Centres

I want to recognize the hard work of yourselves and your teams over these last several weeks on all aspects of good public health management, and especially your responsiveness to our requests for prioritized enhanced surveillance testing and your collaboration with local partners to mobilize the resources to get this done.

Enhanced Surveillance Testing in LTC

I know that you have been working with your LTC homes and local partners on a prioritized basis on a variety of aspects of response. Further to those ongoing efforts, I wanted to advise you that we have been directed to have enhanced surveillance testing of all residents and staff at all LTC homes (red, green and yellow) completed by May 15, 2020.

Enhanced Surveillance Testing in Child Care Centre staff

Also, in response to the COVID-19 outbreak in a child care centre in Toronto, Premier Ford has requested that all staff working in child care centres currently open for essential workers be tested. Similar to the approach to LTC, PHUs are being asked to coordinate testing of these staff in the next two weeks as well.

Implementation Approach

To assist you with these activities, please find attached three documents:

- Enhanced Surveillance Testing for LTCH - Instructions for Public Health Units (note that instructions for child care centre staff will follow shortly)
- List of currently open child care centres across the province
- COVID-19 Enhanced Surveillance Progress Reporting Template which we will be asking you to complete and return to us daily.

I understand that you are already providing reports daily on LTC activities and ask that you continue to do that. The additional reporting being requested here is a report of your progress towards completion of this enhanced surveillance testing within the timeframe requested, and identification of any barriers you are encountering. This information will be used by Dr. Yaffe and myself in providing daily progress reports and issues resolution discussions to the established IMS table.

We are asking for your first report to be submitted to EOCOperations.MOH@ontario.ca no later than 9 am on Monday May 4, 2020 and that this initial report include the planned dates for testing of each of the LTC homes. We will use this plan and your daily reports thereafter to report to the IMS Group and against which we can make planning assumptions and measure our progress. Further details on the testing approach and reporting requirements are enclosed.

If you have any questions, or are encountering any urgent barriers which cannot be resolved locally and cannot wait for the daily report, please contact Liz Walker by email – elizabeth.walker@ontario.ca or by telephone (416) 212-6359 and she will work to escalate the issue immediately.

Thank you again for your continued support to stop the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health and well-being of residents in your local communities across the province.

Sincerely,



David C. Williams, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Chief Medical Officer of Health