

**COVID-19
INFORMATION**

Work is underway to finalize guidelines for health-care and critical infrastructure workers who return from international travel to address any impacts on essential services. All physicians, health-care providers and support staff returning from international travel **MUST** self-identify to their organization or site's occupational health services.

Manitoba patients are advised their surgery may be postponed if their surgeon has determined their procedure can be safely delayed for three months or longer without any significant effects on their health. The goal is to protect patients who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19.

Patients that will be affected by cancellations will include:

- patients older than 70 years of age;
- patients with significant underlying health conditions; and
- patients who are immune compromised.

Patients will be contacted directly to confirm that their surgery is being affected.

CancerCare Manitoba advises that patients with symptoms of a respiratory illness should not visit their sites. Instead, patients with symptoms should call their health-care team and follow their instructions on next steps. Cancer patients should check the website www.cancercare.mb.ca for regular updates to cancer patient information.

Manitobans are reminded that certain individuals should **NOT** visit acute care or long-term care facilities. This includes those who have:

- returned from international travel in the last 14 days;
- been instructed to self-isolate for 14 days; or
- have cold or flu-like symptoms, such as a cough, fever, runny nose, sore throat, weakness or headache.

Only **one visitor per patient** at a time is allowed in acute care facilities, such as hospitals, across Manitoba. This does not apply to parents of children in hospital. Also, exceptions will be made for special circumstances, such as visitors who require an escort or those going to see a patient nearing the end of their life.

Manitoba and Doctors Manitoba have agreed on new payment options to offer virtual visit and virtual care psychotherapy options to supplement traditional models of care including video-conferencing options. Physicians will work with their patients to use these options.

Transportation industry partners needs to ensure all companies are made aware of important considerations with respect to essential cross-border crossings. At this time, public health officials are not mandating drivers to self-isolate after crossing the border to ensure essential services continue.

However, all companies should make sure drivers are not showing respiratory symptoms before crossing the border and take the necessary measures if they exhibit COVID-19 symptoms. This includes calling Health-Links Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or toll-free at 1-888-315-9257 to speak to a health practitioner and requesting the affected driver to self-isolate until they are assessed.

Individuals in Winnipeg directed by Health Links–Info Santé to be tested for COVID-19 will be asked to visit a community screening location. The community screening locations include:

- Access Winnipeg West, 280 Booth Dr.;
- Access Fort Garry, 135 Plaza Dr.;
- Mount Carmel Clinic, 886 Main St.; and
- Access Transcona, 845 Regent Ave. W.

Testing at these sites will be available Monday to Friday 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Those who require screening, assessment and/or testing after hours will still be directed to urgent care sites and emergency departments.

Individuals in rural Manitoba directed by Health Links–Info Santé to be tested for COVID-19 will be asked to visit a community screening location. This includes:

- Thompson Clinic in the Plaza Mall, Thompson from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Manitoba's adult and youth correctional facilities continue to allow visitors, with restrictions in place to protect the health and safety of people in custody as well as staff. Visits from family members will continue to be allowed but with no contact. Visits with legal counsel will continue with no changes. All centres have suspended all visits from volunteers and community agencies until further notice.

As of Monday, March 16, access to courthouses and circuit court locations **has been** restricted to people who are necessary to the court proceedings, such as counsel, witnesses and the accused. All jury trials scheduled before June 30 will proceed with a judge alone or be rescheduled to a later date. All public tours of the Law Courts Building, including school visits and mock trials, are postponed until further notice. For more information, visit: www.manitobacourts.mb.ca/news/covid-19-manitoba-court-schedule-changes/.

In keeping with social distancing strategies outlined to Manitobans and in consultation with key stakeholders, public health officials have advised suspending classes in Manitoba kindergarten to Grade 12 schools effective March 23 to April 10. This is being done to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 in Manitoba.

Public health officials are also advising schools and educational institutions to:

- ensure ill staff and students stay home from school, and support those who are self-isolating at home to ensure they do not fall behind in their studies;
- reduce activities in large groups and crowds;
- increase desk distance between students; and
- consider implementing virtual or online classrooms to reduce the number of people in classrooms and increase distance between staff and students.

As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, all Manitobans have a role to play in slowing its spread and minimizing its impact on the health-care system and in communities.

Social distancing strategies for all Manitobans include:

- cancelling or postponing any large-scale events with more than 250 attendees;
- minimizing prolonged (more than 10 minutes), close (less than two metres) contact between other individuals in public;
- avoiding greetings that involve touching such as handshakes;
- disinfecting frequently used surfaces;
- following public health advice related to self-monitoring and self-isolation if you have travelled or have been exposed to someone ill with the virus; and
- considering avoiding travel, crowded places and events, especially if you are at higher risk.

Employers should review their business continuity plans and take steps to ensure employees can stay home when ill, without facing barriers such as the requirement for sick notes and work from home if possible. Employers should also discontinue non-essential, work-related travel outside of Manitoba and encourage virtual meetings to reduce prolonged, close contact between individuals.

There have been reports of multiple phishing scams related to COVID-19. Many are asking people for credit card information to provide medication following a positive test results. This is not a call that Manitobans would receive from public health officials. Manitobans are advised to not provide any financial data, hang up on the call and to report to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre at (toll-free) 1-888-495-8501.

People are encouraged to take common prevention measures including regular handwashing with soap and warm water for at least 15 seconds. Make sure to dry hands thoroughly.

Alternatively, people can use an alcohol-based hand cleanser if their hands are not visibly dirty. People should also cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, or cough or sneeze into their sleeve.

Being prepared also means seeking official sources of information to ensure the most up-to-date and accurate information is being used. Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living is also urging media to exercise caution in reporting information related to the evolving COVID-19 situation and to avoid hearsay or speculation, as this can spread misinformation.