

MEDIA RELEASE

Kingston Health Sciences Centre confirms a health-care worker has tested positive for COVID-19

Kingston, ON – March 27, 2020 – Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KHSC) has confirmed that a health-care worker at its Kingston General Hospital site has tested positive for the novel coronavirus, COVID-19.

“Keeping our staff and patients safe is our top priority,” says Dr. David Pichora, KHSC’s president and CEO. “We are working with our colleagues at KFL&A Public Health to determine where and when the staff person may have gotten the infection and help identify the person’s close contacts. Through contact tracing, anyone who may be at risk of contracting the virus through this case will be notified by KFL&A Public Health.”

All of KHSC’s infection prevention and control precautions were followed. At this point in time, KHSC’s investigation suggests this was not a work-related infection. The staff member is at home recovering in self-isolation.

Since March 16, KHSC has required all staff to use dedicated entrances to its sites, where they must pass screening in order to enter. As per updated recommendations made by Ontario’s Chief Medical Officer of Health on March 19, health-care workers have been advised to self-isolate for 14 days following international travel.

Also on March 16, through its onsite lab, KHSC started testing health-care workers who meet testing criteria. Results are provided within 24 hours maximum.

Even though personal protective equipment (PPE) is in short supply across the province and the country, Dr. Pichora says KHSC has “been careful in its use of PPE and has ensured staff members have what they need, when they need it.” This means changing standards as the local situation changes and following any new provincial guidelines.

“As this pandemic continues to evolve everyone needs to be extra cautious and follow Public Health’s orders,” says Dr. Pichora. “We are very thankful to our staff and members of our communities for doing all they can to prevent the spread of the virus, including being cooperative with our screening process and visitor restrictions. If there are more ways we can further protect our staff and patients, we will be quick to do whatever is possible.”

For up-to-date recommendations on precautions, screening, self-isolation, travel advice and public gatherings, please consult the Public Health Ontario website at www.publichealthontario.ca or KFL&A Public Health at www.kflaph.ca/coronavirus.

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