

Community Bulletin



To: James Bay and Hudson Bay community members

From: Dr. Elaine Innes, Chief of Staff, Weeneebayko Area Health Authority (WAHA)

cc: Lynne Innes, President and CEO, WAHA

Date: March 12, 2020

Re: **WAHA cancels all work-related travel in response to COVID-19**

Dear Community Members

We are taking the extra precautionary steps to limit the potential spread of COVID-19 in our region in response to the case of COVID-19 confirmed today in Sudbury.

As of today, all staff work-related travel is canceled unless it is medically necessary until further notice.

We are also working with our management team to advise staff on the steps they must take to self-monitor when returning from personal travel and to self-isolate when returning from areas impacted by COVID-19 like Italy, China, Iran etc.).

Also, all staff must report all personal travel to our Occupational Health and Safety department before departure to make sure we have the necessary information to respond if an outbreak of COVID-19 were to happen in our region.

The Executive Team briefed and has the full support of WAHA's Board of Directors regarding the new travel rules for staff.

Instructions if you have a cold or flu-like symptoms

1. Call your local health centre or public health unit, after hours call Telehealth Ontario
 2. Self-isolate yourself
 3. If you have trouble breathing, call 911 or your local emergency services, or go to your nearest Emergency Room.
- Moosonee call the [Porcupine Health Unit](#) at 705-336-2294
 - Moose Factory call the [Moose Factory Health Centre](#) at 705-658-4220
 - Fort Albany call Peetabeck Health Services at 705-278-1131
 - [Kashechewan Health Services](#) at 705-275-4470/4474
 - Attawapiskat Health Services at 705-997-2149

COVID-19 update: Work-related travel canceled.

- Peawanuck call [Weenusk Health Services](#) at 705-473-2525

On weekends and after hours call:

- Toll-free: 1-866-797-0000
- Toll-free TTY: 1-866-797-0007

We have attached [fact sheets that explain how to self-monitor, self-isolate and a guide to self-isolation for caregivers and close contacts.](#)

Mental health and coping during COVID-19

People can become more distressed if they see repeated images or hear repeated reports about the outbreak in the media.

Coping with these feelings and getting help when you need it will help you, your family, and your community recover from a disaster. Connect with family, friends, and others in your community. Take care of yourself and each other and know when and how to seek help.

Things you can do to support yourself:

- Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage of COVID-19.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep and avoid alcohol and drugs.
- Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade. Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories. It can be upsetting to hear about the crisis and see images repeatedly. Try to do some other activities you enjoy to return to your normal life.
- Connect with others. Share your concerns and how you are feeling with a friend or family member. Maintain healthy relationships.
- Maintain a sense of hope and positive thinking.

Share the facts about COVID-19 and the actual risk to others. The risk in Canada remains low as of March 12, 2020. People who have returned from areas of ongoing spread more than 14 days ago and do not have symptoms of COVID-19 do not put others at risk.

We do recommend beginning to practice **Social Distancing** which means remaining out of places where people meet or gather, avoiding local public transportation (e.g., bus, subway, taxi, rideshare), and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others.

Sharing accurate information can help calm fears in others and allow you to connect with them.

Thank you for your close attention and support.



Elaine Innes, MD, CCFP
Chief of Staff, WAHA