



Creating a patient centric, comprehensive and resilient response through collaborative partnerships and coordination of activities among healthcare organizations, public health departments, emergency response agencies and the municipal and provincial emergency management communities.



Renfrew County and District Health Unit

C4 Membership Guidance Definition of a Health Care Worker and guidance for testing and management

Please visit, the Ontario Ministry of Health's [website](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/2019_guidance.aspx) for the most recent Case Definitions, Guidance Documents, Signage and related COVID-19 information.
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/2019_guidance.aspx

Purpose

- Provide a definition of a health care worker (HCW)
- Provide recommendations for when a health care worker should be tested for COVID-19 and self-isolation
- Please note that these recommendations **do not** apply if:
 - A symptomatic HCW is a confirmed COVID-19 case (i.e. has had a positive COVID-19 test result). In this scenario, for a confirmed case to come off self-isolation they must have two negative COVID-19 tests done at least 24 hours apart. General public health guidance is to begin the negative testing process when the confirmed case is asymptomatic.
 - A symptomatic HCW is a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case (e.g., household contact or occupational exposure without consistent and appropriate use of PPE). In this scenario the HCW should be self-isolating for 14 days after break of contact exposure to the confirmed case.

Definition of a health care worker:

A “health care worker” (HCW) includes “health professionals and non-health professionals in clinics, health care facilities, and institutions, who may be in contact with patients, residents, inmates, or other co-workers.

- Examples of health professionals include: nurse, doctor, paramedic, therapist, dentist, public health, lab technician, OT, PT, RT and PSW



- Examples of non-health professionals include: reception, housekeeping, administrative, facilities, security, corrections staff, police and fire personnel
- Examples of clinics, health care facilities, and institutions include: dental clinic, primary care office, hospitals, LTC facilities, retirement homes, group homes, correctional facilities, homeless shelters, public health units and emergency services stations

Definition of “mild illness” and when to test:

Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) recommends testing individuals with any of the following **new** respiratory symptoms:

- fever, cough, sputum production, difficulty breathing, sore throat, or rhinorrhea.

General symptoms would NOT on their own be sufficient to require testing. General symptoms can include:

- fatigue, malaise, headache, dizziness, or loss of appetite.

If general symptoms are accompanied or followed by **a new respiratory symptom**, RCDHU would recommend testing. RCDHU recommends a low COVID-19 testing threshold be applied to HCWs given that the consequences of an infected HCW spreading this virus to colleagues or vulnerable patients is significant.

Notes:

- Self-isolation is based on the first day of symptom onset and NOT based on last days worked.
- HCWs are recommended to call the Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Center (RC VTAC) unless they require urgent medical attention. (If other locations accept HCWs for testing, then these could also be used.)



HCWs who have NOT TRAVELLED			
	Testing recommended? (Yes/No)	Self-Isolation recommendations	Additional considerations
HCW has not travelled and is asymptomatic	No	None	Self-monitor
HCW has not travelled and only has general symptoms	No	Self-isolate until 24 hours after symptom free	If a new respiratory symptom develops, testing is recommended
HCW has not travelled and has new respiratory symptoms	Yes	Self-isolation until after a single a negative test result is received. Following a single negative test result, the usual guidance for return to work is 24 hours after symptom resolution OR as directed by Occupational Health at their institution.	RCDHU will call with positive results only



HCWs who have TRAVELLED			
	Testing recommended? (Yes/No)	Self-Isolation recommendations	Additional considerations
HCW has travelled and is asymptomatic	No	Self-isolate and self-monitor for 14 days from date of return to Canada OR as directed by Occupational Health at their institution.	None
HCW has travelled and only has general symptoms	No	Self-isolate and self-monitor for 14 days from date of return to Canada AND until 24 hours after symptom free OR as directed by Occupational Health at their institution.	If a new respiratory symptom develops, testing is recommended
HCW has travelled and has new respiratory symptoms	Yes	Self-isolation until a single negative test result is received and until 14 days from date of return to Canada has passed and until 24 hours after symptom resolution	RCDHU will call with positive results only

Adapted from Clinical Care Coordination Centre COVID-19.