

Health Advisory: Updated Patients Under Investigation (PUI) Interim Guidance

Minnesota Department of Health, Fri Jan 31 13:00 CST 2020

Action Steps:

Local and tribal health department: Please forward to hospitals, clinics, urgent care centers, emergency departments, and convenience clinics in your jurisdiction.

Hospitals, clinics and other facilities: Please forward to infection preventionists, infectious disease doctors, emergency department staff, hospitalists and all other health care providers who might see patients with acute respiratory symptoms.

Health care providers:

- Update your definition and evaluation criteria for PUI (Patient Under Investigation) to those shown in the chart below.
- Contact MDH at 651-201-5414 (1-877-676-5414) for consultation and arrangement for testing.
- Visit the [CDC 2019 Novel Coronavirus website](#) for additional information on 2019-nCoV and testing criteria.

Background

CDC continues to monitor an outbreak of the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in China. There is much unknown about the transmissibility, severity, and other features associated with 2019-nCoV; therefore, recommendations may change as more information is obtained. There have been more than 9,500 cases (including over 200 deaths) in 20 countries with a novel coronavirus as the cause of the outbreak (including cases in the U.S.). Most frequently reported symptoms include fever, cough, and myalgia or fatigue at onset.

On January 30, 2020, CDC reported the first instance of person-to-person transmission of 2019-nCoV within the U.S. The U.S. Department of State has issued a Level 4: Do No Travel alert for China.

Travelers arriving in the U.S. from China, will continue to be screened for signs/symptoms compatible with 2019-nCoV at airports with CDC Quarantine Stations (including MSP). Travelers with symptoms will be referred for evaluation. Asymptomatic travelers receive a card with information about what to do if symptoms appear (if they develop fever, cough or difficulty breathing they should call ahead to a doctor or emergency room, and let them know that they have been in China).

Recommendations

No vaccine or specific treatment for 2019-nCoV infection is available; care is supportive. See Interim Clinical Guidance for Management of Patients with Confirmed 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Infection (link removed 2024, no longer at CDC). The criteria for a 2019-nCoV PUI are subject to change. We recognize it is difficult to cover every contingency. If a patient has a specific high-risk exposure to someone known or suspected to have probable nCoV please contact MDH to discuss.

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Criteria to Guide Evaluation of PUI for 2019-nCoV

- Fever AND signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough or shortness of breath) requiring hospitalization AND a history of travel from mainland China within 14 days of symptom onset.

OR

- Fever AND signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough or shortness of breath) AND a history of travel from Hubei Province, China within 14 days of symptom onset.

OR

- Fever OR signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough or shortness of breath) AND any person, including healthcare workers, who has had close contact with a laboratory-confirmed 2019-nCoV patient within 14 days of symptom onset

1. PUIs should be reported immediately to the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) at 651-201-5414 and your facility's infection prevention personnel.
2. Interim Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations
PUIs for 2019-nCoV should be asked to wear a surgical mask and evaluated in an airborne infection isolation room (AIIR). If an AIIR is not available, the patient should be transferred to a facility with an AIIR (note: this is only for patients meeting PUI criteria,; for patients being evaluated but PUI criteria has not yet been determined, they can be evaluated in a private room with the door closed). Healthcare personnel should use standard precautions, contact precautions, airborne precautions, and eye protection (e.g., goggles or a face shield). More information can be found at the CDC's Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Known or Patients Under Investigation for 2019 Novel Coronavirus (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/infection-control.html>)
3. PUIs do not require admission to a biocontainment unit. Unless clinically indicated, PUIs may not require hospital admission. However, signs and symptoms may worsen with progression in the second week of illness. All patients should be monitored closely. Recommendations for home care are available at the CDC's Interim Guidance for Implementing Home Care of People Not Requiring Hospitalization for 2019 Novel Coronavirus (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/guidance-home-care.html>)

Additional Infection Control Practices Resources

- Guideline for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Settings (www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/index.html)

See CDC's Interim Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients Under Investigation for 2019 Novel Coronavirus (<https://archive.cdc.gov/#/details?url=https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control.html>).

For More Information

More information is available at the [CDC's 2019 Novel Coronavirus website](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/) or by calling MDH at 651-201-5414.

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A copy of this HAN is available at: [MDH Health Alert Network](#)

The content of this message is intended for public health and health care personnel and response partners who have a need to know the information to perform their duties.