



Office of the Chief Clinical Officer
Dr Steevens' Hospital|Steevens' Lane|D08 W2A8
email: cco@hse.ie

Oifig an Príohoifigeach Cliniciúil
Ospidéal Dr. Steevens|Baile Átha Cliath 8|D08 W2A8

10th February 2020

Re: Coronavirus - Advice for GPs

Dear Doctor,

As you are aware the World Health Organisation recently declared a public health emergency of international concern in relation to coronavirus.

As this is a rapidly evolving situation, we are publishing daily updates and guidance for health professionals on www.hpsc.ie until further notice. As the situation is likely to change, we would recommend you regularly check this webpage. For the general public, information on coronavirus signs and symptoms is available on www.hse.ie/coronavirus.

Guidance

As a GP, we are aware you could be the first point of contact for a patient presenting with this illness. Our immediate priority is to signpost you to guidance which is published at www.hpsc.ie.

PPE

Our other priority is to ensure that you have appropriate protective and prevention equipment available, should it be required. To this end, we will be distributing supplies of appropriate equipment to general practices around the country. Information about the use and disposal of PPE is available on www.hpsc.ie

PPE Packs are currently being produced and it is expected that issue of these packs to GP practices will commence on Monday 10th February. In the event that supplies are not received in your practice by Monday 17th Feb, please contact our GP Procurement Lead, Olivia Power;

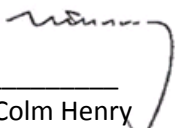
- Email: Olivia.power@hse.ie
- Tel: 059 9178061
- Mobile: 087 2169096

Your local Public Health department is available for advice and guidance on any suspected case, including out of hours. The National Ambulance Service is also prepared to manage cases, and we are liaising directly with GP Out-Of-Hours services.

We are issuing regular updates via email, if you are not receiving these or you wish to give other feedback, please email coronavirus.feedback@hse.ie.

Thank you for your support in this national effort.

Yours sincerely



Dr Colm Henry
Chief Clinical Officer
HSE



HSE Health Protection Surveillance Centre
25-27 Middle Gardiner Street
Dublin
D01 A4A3
Ireland
Tel no: 018765300
hpsc@hse.ie
www.hpsc.ie

6th February 2020

Sent to: Directors of Public Health, Clinical Microbiologists/Laboratory Managers, Infectious Disease Consultants, Emergency Department, Respiratory Physicians, Acute Operations, Community Operations

Dear colleagues

Re: Notifying cases of 2019-Novel Coronavirus acute respiratory disease (2019-nCoV)

Background

Following the first reports of cases of acute respiratory syndrome in Wuhan, China at the end of December 2019, Chinese authorities identified a novel coronavirus as the main causative agent (2019-nCoV). The outbreak has rapidly evolved affecting other parts of China and several countries outside of China have reported cases.

On 30th January 2020, the Director-General of WHO declared that the outbreak of 2019-nCoV constitutes a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). The National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE) led by the Department of Health has agreed that 2019-Novel Coronavirus acute respiratory disease (2019-nCoV) will be specified in legislation as a notifiable disease. The Infectious Diseases Regulations will be amended to reflect this change in the Schedule in the coming weeks (following the appointment of a new Cabinet). At present 2019-nCoV is already notifiable under “any unusual clusters or changing patterns of illness” (Infectious Diseases (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 2003, SI No. 707 of 2003).

Testing for 2019-nCoV is now available at the National Virus Reference Laboratory (NVRL), for further details see [here](#). The latest case definition for 2019-nCoV is available [here](#).

For General Practitioners and Hospital Clinicians (clinical notifications)

If you become aware or suspect that a person on whom you are in professional attendance is ill due to 2019-nCoV, immediately notify the case to the Medical Officer of Health/Director of Public Health in the local Department of Public Health by telephone. The contact details for the MOH/DPH and the counties they cover are available [on the HPSC website](#).



The notification form that should be used when notifying infectious diseases is available [here](#).

Furthermore, the latest algorithms for novel Coronavirus risk assessment for patients presenting to a primary care setting or for use in a receiving hospital are available [here](#).

For Laboratory Directors and Departments of Public Health

In Ireland, the surveillance of 2019-nCoV cases is being managed using the national Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting (CIDR) system; clinical and laboratory notifications and enhanced data collected by Departments of Public Health will be reported and collated in CIDR. The National Virus Reference Laboratory (NVRL) is currently the only laboratory testing for 2019-nCoV in Ireland.

HPSC has provided guidance materials to Laboratory and Public Health users of the system on notifying 2019-nCoV in the CIDR.

Uses of the data and outputs from the 2019-nCoV surveillance system

The notification of cases to the MOH/DPH will trigger a thorough investigation and implementation of control measures. The data will be used to inform public health actions to contain and prevent the transmission of the disease in the community and to health care workers and to determine the incidence, morbidity and mortality of the infection.

The number of cases of 2019-nCoV notified will be reported in the Weekly Infectious Disease Report, available at <https://www.hpsc.ie/notifiablediseases/weeklyidreports/>

As the situation evolves, HPSC will conduct detailed epidemiological analysis and will produce more detailed reports for stakeholders.

HPSC as the International Health Regulations (IHR) focal point for Ireland will report to confirmed and probable cases to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the World Health Organization.

Yours sincerely,

Dr John Cuddihy
Interim Director
HSE Health Protection Surveillance Centre
MCRN: 16227