What is a coronavirus?
Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are known to cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV).

What is a novel coronavirus?
A novel coronavirus (CoV) is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans.

What is COVID-19?
An outbreak of a novel Coronavirus causing severe acute respiratory illness has been reported in Wuhan, China since December 21, 2019. On March 11, 2020 the WHO declare the outbreak a pandemic as it has spread to nearly every country around the world. This virus has not been previously identified and so, since it is new, there is still little known about it including its origin. The virus belongs in the same family of coronaviruses as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), which killed nearly 800 people globally during a 2002/03 outbreak. This coronavirus is called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) or COVID-19.

What are the symptoms of someone infected with a coronavirus?
Symptoms can be different depending on the type of coronavirus, but common signs include respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath, and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death.

Can coronaviruses be transmitted from person to person?
Yes, some coronaviruses can be transmitted from person to person, usually after close contact with an infected patient, for example, in a household, workplace, or health care setting. Some reports also indicate people who have not yet developed symptoms may also be able to infect others.

Is there a vaccine for the COVID-19?
Presently, there is no vaccine for the COVID-19. When a disease is new, there is no vaccine until one is developed. It can take a number of years for a new vaccine to be developed.

What is the treatment for COVID-19?
There is no specific treatment for disease caused by a novel coronavirus. However, many of the symptoms can be treated and therefore treatment is usually based on the symptoms on presentation.

What can I do to protect myself and loved ones?
To reduce exposure to and transmission of the illnesses, maintain basic hand and respiratory hygiene, and avoiding close contact, when possible, with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing. In addition,
- frequently clean hands by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water;
- When coughing and sneezing cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue – throw tissue away immediately and wash hands;
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has fever and cough;
- If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing seek medical care early and share previous travel history with your health care provider;

What if I recently travelled to a country with reported cases and got sick?
If you travelled to an area where cases of COVID-19 was detected, monitor yourself for symptoms to develop within 14 days after you think you were exposed. If you develop symptoms and feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, you should
- Seek medical care right away. Before you go to a doctor’s office or emergency room, call ahead and tell them about your recent travel and your symptoms.
- Wear a mask if available
- Avoid contact with others.
- Do not travel while sick if possible.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds to avoid spreading the virus to others. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Check your local Ministry of Health for information or CARPHA’s website for guidance for travellers available online.

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES
- CARPHA Situation Reports: visit www.carpha.org for updates
- World Health Organization. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)