BACKGROUND

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak of a novel coronavirus, COVID-19 as a pandemic.

RISK OF CONTINUED TRANSMISSION IN & TO CARIBBEAN REGION: VERY HIGH

The aim for all countries now, is to stop transmission and prevent the spread of the virus.

Measures, such as border closures, implementation of social distancing norms, and the restriction of movement to essential personnel, have helped to slow the spread of the virus.

CARPHA urges continued efforts which will keep the region safe.

WHAT IS COVID-19?

The virus belongs in the same family of coronaviruses as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), 2002/03 outbreak and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV), 2012 outbreak.

This 2019 virus is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans.
HOW IS COVID-19 TRANSMITTED?

The virus can be spread by individuals from 2 days before and until 14 days after the onset of symptoms.

Currently, COVID-19 has been shown to spread by:

- Large respiratory droplets often produced by coughing or sneezing which land on a person or surface and transferred to the mouth or nose
- Direct or indirect contact with infected secretions
- Body fluids (e.g., blood, sweat, saliva, sputum, nasal mucus, vomit, urine, or diarrhoea)
- The COVID-19 virus may be spread by individuals that exhibit no symptoms
- There is no evidence that COVID-19 is spread by water, mosquitoes, or food.

TRANSMISSION OF COVID-19

1. Transfers from person to person via tiny droplets from the nose or mouth
2. Spreads when a person with COVID-19 coughs or sneezes
3. Also spreads via contact
4. Touching surfaces, such as desks and door handles where the tiny droplets from an infected person have fallen

HOW LONG CAN COVID-19 LAST ON SURFACES?

- Cardboard: 24 hours
- Wood & cloth: 2 days
- Glass & banknotes: 4 days
- Plastic & stainless steel: up to 7 days

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

Imported Cases
- Exposed to COVID-19 abroad
- Developed symptoms in home country
- Tested positive for COVID-19
  E.g. Husband returning from a conference abroad

Local Spread/Secondary Cases
- No travel history
- Exposed to imported case
- Developed symptoms and tested positive for COVID-19
- Able to identify source of, or link to infection
  E.g. Wife of the man who attended the conference abroad

Community Spread
- Persons in the community developed symptoms and tested positive
- No travel history or contact with an imported case or confirmed COVID-19 case
- Source of, or link to infection is unknown
SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

*Based on patients in the United States of America

**Most Common:**
- Fever (temperature > 37.5°C)
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Cough (both dry and productive)
- Muscle pain

**Atypical:**
Older adults and persons with medical conditions may have delayed presentation of fever and respiratory symptoms.

Diarrhoea and nausea may be experienced before developing fever and other symptoms.

Loss of smell and an altered sense of taste have been reported.

**Illness Severity**

**MILD to MODERATE:**
Patients present with mild symptoms up to mild pneumonia.

**SEVERE:**
Patients have severe difficulty breathing, low oxygen levels and >50% lung involvement on imaging.

**CRITICAL:**
Patients can have respiratory failure, shock and multi-organ system dysfunction.

- Mild to Moderate (81%)
- Severe (14%)
- Critical (5%)

**PREVENTION OF DISEASE**

**Social Distancing**
Keep at least 2 metres (6 feet) away from everyone when outside of your home

**Hand Hygiene**
Wash your hands often and carefully with soap and water and/or clean with an alcohol-based hand rub with 60-80% alcohol content (ethanol or isopropanol).

**Cough and Sneeze Etiquette**
Cough or sneeze into your elbow or sleeve if tissue is not available
REFERENCES:


