



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary

January 21, 2020

Dear Colleague:

We write to offer guidance on identification, reporting and infection prevention and control for an outbreak of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) pneumonia in Wuhan City, China. Additional details and resources may be found in this CDC Health Alert Network notification at <https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/han00426.asp>. To date, no cases of this illness have been identified in the United States; this is preparatory guidance.

Some patients with this illness are reported to have fever, cough, and dyspnea, and chest radiographs showing bilateral pulmonary infiltrates. However, limited information is available to characterize the spectrum of clinical illness associated with 2019-nCoV. Care is supportive. There is no vaccine or specific treatment for this infection.

In line with CDC guidance, we recommend the following:

- (1) Ask all patients about recent travel, particularly those with fever and acute respiratory illness.**
- (2) Immediately report to your local health department any patients who meet criteria for a Patient Under Investigation (PUI) for 2019-nCoV, or any patient for whom clinical presentation or exposure history is equivocal.**

PUI criteria are online at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/clinical-criteria.html>, and as follows:

- 1) Fever AND symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) –and in the last 14 days before symptom onset,
 - History of travel from Wuhan City, China -or-
 - Close contact with a person who is under investigation for 2019-nCoV while that person was ill.
- 2) Fever OR symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) –and in the last 14 days before symptom onset,
 - Close contact with an ill laboratory-confirmed 2019-nCoV patient.

(3) Closely follow infection prevention and control recommendations:

- Ask all PUI for 2019-nCoV to wear a surgical mask as soon as they are identified.
 - Evaluate all PUI in a private room with the door closed, ideally an airborne infection isolation room if available.
 - Health care providers entering the room of a PUI should use standard precautions, contact precautions, airborne precautions and eye protection.
- <https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/basics/transmission-based-precautions.html>

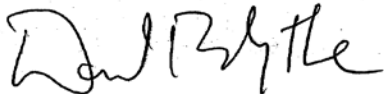
- (4) **Immediately notify your local health department in the event of a PUI for 2019-nCoV. If you are unable to immediately reach your local health department, notify the Maryland Department of Health at 410-767-6700 during working hours or at 410-795-7365 after working hours.**

Thank you for your help protecting the public from this new illness.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Monique Duwell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Monique" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Duwell".

Monique Duwell, MD, MPH
Chief, Center for Infectious Disease Surveillance and Outbreak Response
Maryland Department of Health

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Blythe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Blythe".

David Blythe, MD, MPH
Director, Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Outbreak Response Bureau
Maryland Department of Health