

For Immediate Release | January 30, 2019

Gastrointestinal illness outbreak at Royal Inland Hospital

KAMLOOPS – Royal Inland Hospital is currently experiencing a gastrointestinal outbreak on three units, with 16 patients and 11 staff affected as of Tuesday.

As well, an outbreak has been declared at Hillside Psychiatric Centre, with seven patients and 13 staff members showing symptoms.

In accordance with an outbreak response management plan, the hospital is not admitting patients to 4North, 5South and 7North – the medical units experiencing the outbreak. Patients on those wards who are waiting for admission to long-term care or assisted living facilities will also not be transferred until the outbreak is over.

These precautions may mean congestion in the Emergency Department and the public is advised that the wait to see a physician could be longer than normal.

People with non-emergent illnesses should contact their family doctor or a walk-in clinic. They may also stay home and rest or consult with a health-care provider by calling Healthlink BC at 811. However, anyone who feels they need emergency care should not hesitate to come to the hospital or call 9-1-1.

The outbreak has not yet caused surgical cancellations. However, the situation will be monitored closely.

RIH asks visitors to stay home if they are feeling unwell. Healthy people are permitted to visit, but may want to postpone the visit until the outbreak is over. Signage at the entrance of the affected units advises that an outbreak is ongoing so people can take proper precautions.

In the meantime, enhanced housekeeping is in place to focus on patient rooms, bathrooms, frequently touched areas, and common areas. Staff members on the units with the outbreak have been advised to wear gowns, gloves, and facial protection when working with patients.

We also encourage staff and visitors to practise appropriate hand hygiene. Cleaning your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based sanitizer is the key to preventing the virus or reducing its spread.

Thank you for your support of the hospital.

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