

For Immediate Release | Feb. 1, 2019

Gastrointestinal illness outbreak continues

KAMLOOPS – Royal Inland Hospital (RIH) and Hillside Psychiatric Centre continue to cope with a gastrointestinal outbreak.

To date, there are 31 patients and 26 staff who have been symptomatic on four wards at the hospital and at Hillside.

As well, community facilities are experiencing illness and people may want to consider postponing visits to these sites. If members of the public are ill with symptoms of vomiting or diarrhea, we request that you stay away from long-term care and assisted-living facilities until 48 hours after your illness is over.

Please see the Interior Health public website for facilities impacted, [Active Facility Outbreaks](#).

On Thursday and Friday, 20 surgeries were postponed at RIH to ensure beds are available in case of emergency admissions. All patients with surgeries to be rescheduled were notified and we apologize for this inconvenience.

As well, the hospital continues to restrict admissions of patients to 4North, 5South, 5North 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 not be transferred until the outbreak is over.

Thank you to local residents who are helping to ensure the Emergency Department does not become congested.

People are choosing other options by calling their family physician or nurse practitioner, attending a walk-in clinic, or making an appointment at the Urgent Primary Care Centre at 250-314-2256. People are also able to call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1 with health concerns.

However, anyone who feels they need emergency care should not hesitate to come to the hospital or call 9-1-1 for assistance.

Some specimens tested by BC Centre for Disease Control have been positive for norovirus, which causes nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea, and sometimes cramping and fever. Please visit [HealthLink BC](#) to learn more about this ailment.

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.

Housekeeping staff continue to work diligently to keep patient rooms, bathrooms, frequently touched areas, and common areas free of the virus. Staff members on the units with the outbreak have been advised to wear gowns, gloves, and facial protection when working with patients.

Vigilant hand washing with soap and water or use of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer is essential to help prevent illness and spread of the virus.

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