COVID-19 Outbreak Declared At Pembroke Regional Hospital
After Second Staff Member Tests Positive

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 1, 2021

PEMBROKE – A COVID-19 outbreak has been declared at the Pembroke Regional Hospital as a result of a second member of its health care team testing positive for the virus.

The outbreak has been contained to personnel in the Emergency Department and this second case has been linked to the positive staff case identified on December 27th.

The Province of Ontario requires the declaration of an outbreak when two cases in the same workplace are connected.

"Once again we want to assure our community that our hospital, and in particular, our Emergency Department, remains a safe place to come to for medical care due to the safety measures we have in place to protect our patients, visitors, staff and physicians," said PRH President and CEO,Pierre Noel, who added that no patients have been identified as high risk contacts of the COVID positive staff members.

Since receiving notification of the first case, the hospital has worked closely with its occupational health and safety team and the Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) to ensure that anyone identified with a risk of exposure has been tested and is isolating and monitoring for symptoms.

"The good news is that extremely thorough contact tracing and testing has revealed only one additional positive case and a good number of negative results. We want the community to know that no staff members who were identified as being at risk of exposure have been at work since the first case was identified nor will they be allowed to return to work until we are confident that there is no ongoing risk," Mr. Noel said.

The hospital maintains strict safety measures in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. These include organization-wide use of personal protective equipment, diligent hand hygiene and physical distancing practices, as well as guidance and protocols when physical distancing in shared spaces is not possible.

Dr. Robert Cushman, RCDHU Acting Medical Officer of Health, confirmed that PRH has conducted a thorough assessment of all patient contacts in the ED during the identified time period and that there were no breaches in protocols. He said that he and his team continue to work with the hospital to complete the investigation and bring the outbreak to a close.

"I want to assure the public that the PRH Emergency Department is safe and that there is absolutely no reason to stay away in the event that you need medical care," Dr. Cushman said.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:
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