

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

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Ministère de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée

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April 22, 2009

MEMORANDUM TO: Central Ambulance Communications Centres (CACCs)
Ambulance Communications Services (ACSs)
Municipal Emergency Medical Services (EMSs)
Ornge

FROM: Dennis Brown
Senior Manager
Performance & Quality Management

RE: Severe Respiratory Illness (SRI) Advisory

We have been advised by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health for Ontario of recent instances where patients in Mexico have presented with severe influenza-like symptoms that have progressed to severe respiratory distress.

Given the high number of Ontario residents who travel to Mexico it is essential that front line ambulance system call-takers, dispatchers and paramedic crews be particularly vigilant for information from callers or patients suggesting the possibility of febrile respiratory illness (FRI) or SRI cases.

Call-takers in CACCs are reminded to ensure that the FRI screening tools from DPCI/DPCI-2 are fully utilized when screening requests for land or air ambulance service. Dispatchers are reminded of the need to be very diligent in advising paramedics and other first responders when there is information available which may suggest the existence of a FRI. Suspected cases of FRI or SRI should be reported to the CACC or ACS duty officer as quickly as possible.

Ambulance service providers and paramedics are reminded to exercise barrier protection precautions for those patients where the presence of an FRI is reported or suspected.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dennis Brown".

Dennis Brown

- c. M. Bates
R. Hawkins
Senior Field Managers
A. Winter
A. Campeau
Regional Base Hospital Program Directors