

INFECTION CONTROL RESOURCE TEAMS

September 26, 2008

Ontario is creating Infection Control Resource Teams (ICRTs) to provide rapid, on-site assistance with outbreak investigation and management in hospitals. The teams, established through the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, would be assembled and deployed to support facilities and local public health units in outbreak situations when the Chief Medical Officer of Health determines that a need exists.

Expertise

Based on the specific needs of the facilities, the teams may consist of health care professionals with the following expertise:

- Experienced physician who specializes in infection control/microbiology;
- Experienced senior infection prevention and control practitioner;
- Epidemiologist familiar with health care associated infections;
- Experienced environmental services/housekeeping lead;
- Public health expert experienced in outbreak management.

Role

The ICRT will act as an expert consulting group to the hospital, and as a support to any investigation that may be underway. It will operate as part of the hospital's outbreak management team.

The team will also work with the local public health unit, the regional infection control network and the hospital to improve local infection control capacity.

At the end of the outbreak, the ICRT will debrief the hospital's outbreak management team and prepare a report about the outbreak. A final report, with recommendations, will be made available to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, the Local Integration Health Network (LHIN), local public health unit and the hospital.

Existing Local Capacity

The teams will build on three existing levels of infection control capacity. This includes:

Hospitals

- Infection prevention and control practitioners;
- Laboratory resources;
- Infectious disease physician/medical microbiologist.

Public health units

- Medical officer of health/associate medical officer of health;
- Communicable disease staff – including public health inspectors and public health nurses;
- Epidemiologists.

Regional Infection Control Networks

- There are 14 networks set up across the province promoting consistent surveillance practices, and infection prevention and control policies;
- Each network has a coordinator, network consultant and part-time medical coordinator.

For public inquiries call ServiceOntario, INFOLine at 1-866-532-3161 (Toll-free in Ontario only)

Steve Erwin, Minister's Office, 416-326-3986
Mark Nesbitt, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care,
416-314-6197

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