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| To: | General Practices, Pharmacists, After-Hours Centres and Emergency Departments in the greater Wellington and Wairarapa regions |
| From: | Dr Jill McKenzie, Medical Officer of Health |
| Date: | 09/04/2020 |
| Title: | Public Health Advisory: COVID-19 Updated Case Definition and Advice for Health Professionals |

Please distribute the following information to relevant staff in your organisation.

COVID-19 Updated Case Definition and Advice for Health Professionals

Updated Case Definition 8 April 2020

Please be aware that the Ministry of Health has updated the COVID-19 Case Definition (previous version 3 April 2020): <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-resources-health-professionals/case-definition-covid-19-infection>

Key changes are:

- **Addition of priority groups for investigation and testing as follows:**
 - The Ministry of Health now recommend testing of symptomatic close contacts of confirmed or probable cases
 - Testing of symptomatic essential workers now no longer requires the worker to have been a close contact of a probable or confirmed case
 - Additional priority for testing in extended families in confined living conditions that identify as Māori or Pasifika ethnicity.
- **Change in definition of a probable case** that emphasises the importance of testing being undertaken, if possible, before being classified as a probable case.
- **Excluding other diagnoses in suspect cases.** The Ministry of Health has emphasised that before considering someone as a suspect case (i.e. meets the clinical criteria but is not part of the priority groups recommended for testing), ensure that other urgent diagnoses are excluded.
- **Changes in management of close contacts** depending on the status of the symptomatic person they are contacts of, as follows:
 - If a close contact of a suspect case then they do not need to self-quarantine* but practice meticulous hygiene, monitor their health, and immediately isolate if they develop symptoms.
 - If a close contact of a confirmed or probable case they are required to self-quarantine at home, be monitored for symptoms and if symptoms develop be tested.

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* Self-quarantine has the same meaning as the previously used term “self-isolation” i.e. well people exposed to an infectious case who may be incubating the infection and need to avoid close contact with others. This includes not visiting public places such as supermarkets or using public transport.

Updated Advice for Health Professionals 8 April 2020

This updated version (previous version 30 March 2020) includes reordering of some of the sections and changes to align with sections affected by the updated case definition:

https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/updated-advice-for-health-professionals-covid-19-8april_2020.docx