Memo

**To:** Quest Community

**From:** Health and Safety Team

**Date:** April 11, 2023

**Re: Respiratory Illnesses**

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Dear Quest Community,

There are several respiratory viruses that can make people sick in the workplace such as colds, flus and coronavirus.

**Transmission**

Respiratory viruses can spread through indirect or direct contact. Some common ways viruses are transmitted in the workplace include:

* Close, prolonged contact with someone who is sick such as shaking hands
* Respiratory droplets and aerosols generated when you cough, sneeze, or breath
* When a person touches a contaminated services and then touches their eyes, nose, or mouth

**Preventing Respiratory viruses**

It is important that the Quest Community takes reasonable care to prevent respiratory illnesses. Workplace hygiene is the most important factor in mitigating transmission:

* Individuals and Employees should stay home if they have any infectious symptoms such as diarrhea, vomiting, conjunctivitis, fever, or worsening cough
* If an employee has symptoms, but is well enough to work, they are encouraged to wear a KN95 mask for 10 days or until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer
* When supporting an individual who is sick, employees are encouraged to wear a mask and increase hand hygiene/ sanitizing
* Employees and Individuals must complete proper hand-hygiene
* Employees and Individuals must follow respiratory etiquette (i.e., cough into your elbow or sneeze into a Kleenex)
* High touch surfaces and workspaces should be sanitized on an on-going basis
* PPE is available for individuals and employees upon request should employees wish to wear masks.

**Covid-19 Update**

* There are still several Covid-19 strains present within Alberta
* Employees and Individuals are no longer required to test for Covid-19. Please continue to report symptoms to management as the Health and Safety team monitors the Quest Community for outbreaks
* WCB claims will no longer be considered unless there is a widespread outbreak in the workplace that is deemed by the Medical Officer of Health
* The Quest Community is encouraged to stay up to date on flu shots and coronavirus vaccinations
* Covid-19 is now grouped under “Respiratory Illnesses”

**Communicating Respiratory Illness**

* All employees must read the Communication Book for on-going updates pertaining to Respiratory Illnesses including Covid-19
* The Agency will no longer be communicating positive Covid-19 employee cases
* Employees are still encouraged to report illnesses including positive Covid-19 cases to the ERC (following process above)

If you have any questions concerning health and safety, please reach out to a member of the Joint Health and Safety Committee. Additionally, we encourage all employees to review location Hazard Assessments, as Covid-19 is now listed as a Hazard.

Thank you,

The Health and Safety Team