

Central Eglinton Children's Centre
OUTBREAK CONTINGENCY PLAN

Date Policy and Procedures Established: July 5, 2022

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An outbreak is:

- Two or more cases of enteric illness linked in terms of time, exposure to source and most often location
- Two or more cases with similar symptoms in a classroom in a 48 hour period

Identifying an Outbreak

Early recognition of an outbreak, along with IPAC measures, will help limit the spread of illness and the number of children or staff who become ill.

If we Suspect an Outbreak

Immediately follow these steps if you suspect an outbreak:

1. Isolate all ill children until they can be taken home and send ill staff home
2. Notify parents or emergency contacts to pick-up ill children as soon as possible
3. Start a [line list](#): record names, date of birth, gender, all symptoms, the date and time children and staff became ill and their room number or type (e.g., infant room or toddler room)
4. Start additional control measures:
 - a. Adequate supplies for hand cleaning and disinfecting
 - b. Appropriate disinfectant to kill circulating organism
 - c. Suspend water and sensory play activities
 - d. Reinforce with staff, children, and visitors the importance of keeping hands clean
5. Contact staff and the parents of children that are away from CECC (before the outbreak was declared) to inform them of the outbreak and to identify if they are cases (e.g., do they have similar signs and symptoms of those currently ill?) If so, add them to the [line list](#) .
6. Contact Toronto Public Health (TPH) to report the outbreak by calling the Communicable Diseases Surveillance Unit at 416-392-7411. Have the following information ready when you call TPH:
 - a. Name and address of CECC (name of school if in TDSB or TCDSB location)
 - b. Name of Director or person reporting outbreak
 - c. List of symptoms
 - d. Onset date, symptoms and duration of symptoms of the first case of illness
 - e. Most recent case of illness, date, symptoms, and duration of illness
 - f. Population at risk per room
 - g. Number of ill per room
 - h. Any lab results or medical diagnosis of children off ill
7. Obtain permission from parents to submit stool specimen samples to the Public Health Laboratory

Gastrointestinal Illness

Gastrointestinal (enteric) illness refers to inflammation or infection of the gastrointestinal tract. Symptoms of gastrointestinal illness may occur suddenly, and include:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal pain
- Headache
- Fever, chills and/or myalgia

Gastrointestinal illness may be due to:

- Viruses, such as Norovirus, Rotavirus or Adenovirus.
- Bacteria, such as E. coli, Salmonella, Cambylobacter, Shigella, C. Difficile, or Staphylococci; or
- Parasites, such as Cryptosporidium, Giardia, or Amoeba.

In child care centres, gastrointestinal illness is most often caused by viruses, such as norovirus. These viruses are very contagious; they can spread person-to-person by direct contact, or through indirect contact with surfaces or objects in the ill person's environment. For example, infection may be spread through:

- Touching contaminated surfaces or objects.
- Caring for a person with the illness.
- Changing diapers, or shared diapering equipment that is not effectively cleaned between uses.
- Sharing food, utensils, toys or items with someone who is infected.
- Eating food or drinking liquids contaminated with the virus (contamination of food or water may occur at the source or during transportation, preparation, handling or storage).

A 48-hour outbreak of gastroenteritis is defined as two or more cases meeting the following case definition with a common epidemiological link (e.g., the same room or programme, or the centre) with initial onset within a 48-hour period.

A case (child or staff) of gastrointestinal illness can be defined as:

- Two or more episodes of diarrhea within a 24-hour period, or;
- Two or more episodes of vomiting within a 24-hour period, or;
- One or more episodes of diarrhea and one or more episodes of vomiting within a 24-hour period.

If the number of children or staff experiencing gastrointestinal symptoms increase CECC:

- Review our surveillance data, communication books or daily logs for information and symptoms of ill children/staff.
- Identify similar symptoms of illness in children/staff.
- Review recent child/staff absenteeism records.
- Consider other possible reasons for symptoms (new medications or diet changes).

Reporting an Outbreak

CECC's must report suspected outbreaks and/or reportable diseases (Diseases of Public Health Significance) to TPH, as outlined in the Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.7,

Regulation 135/18

CECC must develop and maintain written policies and procedures in preparation for reporting diseases or suspected outbreaks.

- If an outbreak is suspected or if we are unsure there is an outbreak, we will call the TPH Communicable Disease Notification Unit (CDNU) for further guidance: 416 392-7411, Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- After hours, call 911.
- We will fill out the Reportable Disease Notification Form – Copy saved to desktop, and fax it to 416 392-0047
- We will use the TPH Enteric Outbreak Reporting Form, on the TPH website, to report an enteric outbreak. TPH will use this information to determine if an outbreak exists.

When calling TPH have the following information ready when you call:

- Date and time of the first case
- Date and time of the most recent case
- Total number of ill children and staff per room and total number for the childcare centre
- Signs or complaints of symptoms of illness (e.g., diarrhea, vomiting)

If TPH declares that there is an outbreak, a unique outbreak number will be assigned. We will use all outbreak-related documentation.

Communicating with TPH

After reporting a gastrointestinal outbreak, a TPH outbreak investigator (public health nurse or public health inspector) will follow up to conduct an outbreak investigation. During a gastrointestinal outbreak, it is important to work with TPH to minimize further illness spread.

The outbreak investigation may include:

- Assessing the outbreak
- Declaring the outbreak
- Reviewing the Line Lists
- Providing exclusion directions for ill children and staff
- Assisting in the collection and transportation of specimens to the Public Health Ontario Laboratory
- Interpreting laboratory reports
- Reviewing outbreak control measures
- Declaring the outbreak over

In many cases, a public health inspector may also be assigned to conduct an on-site visit to review IPAC measures, confirm outbreak control measures are in place, and provide consultation and education.

Communicating Updates to TPH

It is important to notify the TPH outbreak investigator if:

- A positive test result is received,
- There is spread of illness to another group or cohort,
- There is a change in symptoms experienced,
- There is a hospitalization or death of a child or staff,
- There is a parental concern or a difficult question, or
- There is media interest or concerns.

Create and Maintain a Line List

A Line List is a tool that summarizes information about children and staff associated with the outbreak. The Line List allows the TPH outbreak investigator to assess and monitor the outbreak by keeping track of the number of cases each day. An Enteric Outbreak Line List template will be provided by the outbreak investigator for CECC to maintain.

Each new case that meets the case definition should be added to the Line List. Each case should only be listed once, and all cases should be listed in chronological order of when the symptoms began or when the illness started. A separate Line List should be maintained for children and for staff.

Update the Line List daily, and complete all information required. To gather and confirm information, CECC may be required to contact parents, guardians or staff members. If new information is received, we will update the Line List and report new information to the outbreak investigator.

Collect Samples

Specimen sampling is used to identify the cause of the outbreak. This could include stool samples, food and/or water samples.

During a gastrointestinal outbreak, save any leftover food, if available, for analysis. The food should be dated and kept in the refrigerator. As this food may be a source of illness, the TPH outbreak investigator may arrange to have the food tested. All menus and catering information must be made available.

To help identify the source of the outbreak, it may be necessary to distribute stool kits to collect stool samples. TPH will provide the stool kits, along with a letter to parents instructing them on how to use the kits. See the TPH Gastrointestinal Outbreak Management in Child Care Centres, "How to Collect a Stool Sample."

It is important to obtain consent from parents or guardians before submitting a stool specimen to the Public Health Ontario Laboratory. In the event that an opportunity to collect a stool specimen presents itself prior to notifying the parent or guardian, the specimen can be collected but not sent to the lab until consent has been provided. Results from laboratory specimens will always be provided to the parent or guardian of the child by TPH.

Communicating with Families and Staff

Once an outbreak is declared, TPH will provide a letter or fact sheet to be shared with parents and guardians, to inform them of the outbreak and what actions are necessary should their child become symptomatic. TPH will also provide an Outbreak Notification Sign that should be posted at all entrances to inform parents, guardians, staff and visitors of the outbreak.

Outbreak Control Measures

During an outbreak, IPAC measures can help prevent further spread of illness. See CECC's Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC).

Routine Practices

- IPAC procedures will always be followed when there is a potential risk of exposure to body fluids.
- CECC will ensure that personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn during activities in which staff may be exposed to infection. For example, staff must wear appropriate PPE when they are required to handle soiled items, such as diapers; when they clean and disinfect surfaces or objects that have been contaminated by body fluids, such as vomit; or when they provide care to a child experiencing symptoms of illness.

Exclusion

- CECC will separate sick children and staff at CECC from well children and staff. Eglinton – either in the wellness room, the office or in the corner of the classrooms at St Monica.
- Children who become ill while attending CECC will be isolated from other children, and parents or guardians called to arrange for them to be picked up.
- Ill children will be supervised and cared for by a designated staff member in a dedicated room
- Cohorting during the outbreak. Children and staff will be assigned to dedicated rooms (e.g., cohorting and movement between rooms will be restricted. As much as possible, we will limit the movement of staff from room-to-room.
- Admittance of new children may be suspended during an outbreak.
- All special events/in person meetings will be postponed - Virtual tools will be used instead - ZOOM, etc.
- Staff eating areas will have spaces for one person only and will be disinfected after each use
- Staff will not move between sites

Field Trips/Special Visitors

- CECC will not go on any excursions outside the centre
- CECC will not admit special visitors

Use of PPE

- Staff will wear single use gloves when cleaning/disinfecting or caring for an ill child during an outbreak
- Staff may be required to wear masks
- Staff may be required to wear gowns and eye protection when caring for symptomatic children - vomit, cough etc

Enhanced Cleaning & Disinfecting

- Staff will wear single use gloves when cleaning/disinfecting during an outbreak
- Common areas, high touch surfaces and toys will be disinfected more frequently
- A stronger disinfectant will be used:
 - Oxivir Plus Disinfectant - diluted according to the instructions on the label
 - Staff will use chemical gloves, protective eyewear.
 - Outbreak Toy Washing Instructions will be followed for disinfection of toys and surfaces
 - See POSTER in classrooms.
- Air Purifiers will be turned to high

Discontinuation of Communal Sensory Materials

- Shared sensory play experiences will be suspended (water table, sandbox, etc.
- Any sensory play materials (e.g. playdough prepared and in use prior to the outbreak being declared will be discarded.
- If individual portions/bins are provided they will be labelled and disinfected prior to use by another child.
- Food will be served cafeteria style with no sharing of utensils/serving dishes etc.

Food experiences/ Cooking activities will be suspended

Hand Hygiene

- Special emphasis will be put on proper hand hygiene, increased handwashing
- Hand sanitizer will be placed at all entrances with signs to encourage all visitors and those entering the building/classrooms

Respiratory Etiquette

- Special emphasis will be put on proper respiratory etiquette
- Kleenex boxes will be placed in all entrances with signs to encourage proper respiratory etiquette

Communication

- families and staff will be notified by email and Storypark posts of the identification of an outbreak and any pertinent information
- School principals and
- signage will be placed at entrances to inform those entering of the outbreak

Declaring an Outbreak Over

The outbreak will be declared over by the TPH outbreak investigator when CECC is clear of new cases for a specified period of time.

Generally, the outbreak is declared over 5 days from the onset of symptoms in the last case. This may change depending on the identification of a specific pathogen causing the outbreak.

A record of the outbreak will be kept on file for a year.