

MOH Update, COVID Response in Schools

Grey Bruce

Creating Healthy and Safe Communities for All

Dr. Ian Arra, MD MSc FRCPC ACPM ABPM
Medical Officer Of Health
Grey Bruce Health Unit

Objectives

- Review COVID-19 incident October 18 to provide better understanding of the COVID-19 response process in schools in Grey and Bruce Counties

COVID Team Response

- Sunday October 18 2020
- Osprey Central School in the Municipality of Grey Highlands
- 3 cases in 3 classes in 1 school
- Bus route shared by 2 other schools
- Over 30 students in the school from Mennonite community
- how big is this?

COVID Team Response

- Leads assigned for COVID, school and ID teams for collaborative approach
- Managers, Dr. Arra, Leads, Communications met with School and BWDSB Board officials
- Contact tracing/exposure assessment completed for in school and community contacts
- Assessed exposure environments i.e. classes, home, after-school programs/daycares, bus (including all schools represented), extracurricular activities

COVID Team Response

- Problem solved with School about reorganization delay and options, replacing teachers, closing school, etc.
- Prioritized assessment of teachers to identify HR or LR so school would know how many teachers would be off for 2 weeks
- Notified Assessment Centres
- Coordinate CCM upload of contacts

COVID Team Response

- Managed case and contacts as per guidelines
- Support principal/school board with messaging.
- Work with Communications and Dr. Arra for Media Release and/or social media
- Notified daycare in town that not at risk
- Activated mobile assessment unit from GBHU using Municipal Office parking lot in Maxwell to swab approx. 100 HR contacts

Engaging stakeholders

Keeping stakeholders posted on the progress of the response through multiple communications on several milestones. The frequency of the contact was proportionate to the level of involvement of the stakeholder

- Board of Health Chair and Vice Chair
- School officials
- Wardens, Mayors and CAOs
- MMPs
- Relevant hospital CEOs and Assessment Center managers.
- The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education
- Neighbouring Health Units
- Other stakeholders (faith leaders, local physicians, LTC, ...)

Communication Team Response

- Two days before the media release, we began monitoring the pulse of the community to gauge any rising levels of concern or disquiet.
- Two draft media releases were developed; one in response to the positive cases and a second was prepared for use prior to confirmation of positive cases and intended to address any developing anxiety seen in the community. Both releases provided assurance of the role of Public Health in managing the cases, case contacts, and subsequent response.
- Multiple team engagements that included, in part, discussions exploring issues relevant to communication with the public and specific content to be included; i.e. no need for asymptomatic testing, GBHU swab team to be on scene, only those contacted at risk, etc.

Communication Team Response

- Discussions were carried out with Board of Education partners to ensure alignment of messaging and assurance of our lead in initiating communication and subsequent response.
- Working with Board officials, we were able to advise on the level of risk and the appropriate level of their own operational response, such as addressing considerations with respect to maintaining 'modified' normal operations within the school.
- The final version of the media release and timing of release were developed in consultation with the Board partners.

Communication Team Response

- Recognizing the event was occurring on a weekend with limited general newsgathering capability; key local media were advised of a breaking story and put on stand-by prior to the release going out.
- The release was issued simultaneously with the daily situation report to provide clarity with regard to the new cases seen in the daily report.
- The MOH was available to the media to conduct 6 follow-up interviews.
- Follow-up was undertaken with media to ensure they were satisfied with the process with respect to the serious nature of requiring a call out and stand-by.

Results

- Team engagement is optimal
- Stakeholder engagement and satisfaction is optimal
- As of this day, midpoint, no new cases
- Minimal calls/emails from concerned parents (Metric for communication performance-, positive results)

Questions?



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