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UPDATED: 61-year-old woman is the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in The Bahamas

3-4 minutes



Acting Minister of Health Jeffrey Lloyd (centre) announced that a 61-year-old female resident of New Providence who does not have relevant travel history is the first confirmed person with COVID-19 in The Bahamas during a press conference at the Ministry of Health, Sunday. Also seated from left: Dr. Nikkah Forbes, Director of Infectious Diseases and Manager of the National AIDS Centre; Permanent Secretary, MOH, Marco Rolle; Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Pearl McMillan and Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Delon Brennen. (BIS Photos/Kemuel Stubbs)

<#>By Llonella Gilbert

<#>Acting Minister of Health Jeffrey Lloyd announced that a 61-year-old female resident of New Providence who does not have relevant travel history is the first confirmed person with COVID-19 in The Bahamas.

<#>During a press conference at the Ministry of Health on Sunday, Minister of Lloyd explained that the confirmed case presented with symptoms of a fever and cough.

<#>“She is not known to have travelled outside of the country in the past 20 days. At this time the patient’s exposure is unknown. The patient and family members have been informed of the diagnosis. She is receiving care in the designated isolation area of the Princess Margaret Hospital.

<#>“We are currently investigating her family and social contacts to determine whether they could have been the source of her infection.”

<#>Minister Lloyd stressed that the case was detected in the health system because of Ministry of Health’s enhanced surveillance methods for COVID-19. These measures include physicians reporting patients who present with respiratory infections and testing where indicated.

<#>“We have made the decision to expand our testing and have heightened sensitivity for persons presenting with influenza like symptoms due to lessons learnt from countries that have diagnosed cases in keeping with this enhanced surveillance approach. The investigation is ongoing and we will update the public within 24 hours.”

<#>He also noted that steps are being taken to respond to this public health threat. These measures include:

- #• Aggressive and extensive contact tracing

- #• Recommendation to the community efforts to mitigate transmission

#Minister Lloyd stated that to prevent further transmission of the virus persons must:

- #• Wash hands thoroughly with 60 per cent hand sanitizer or soap and water for 20 seconds;

- #• Do not touch your face with your hands;

- #• Keep social distancing of three to six feet from persons;

- #• Do not shake hands, hug or greet by kissing;

- #• If you are sick, use respiratory hygiene

- #• Cough into your sleeve, not your hands

- #• Cough into a tissue and dispose in trash can immediately

- #• Stay home if you are sick with flu like symptoms

- #• If you feel your symptoms require medical care, call your doctor's office or the COVID-19 hotline before you go to the clinic of hospital.

#He said, "We remind the public, if you have respiratory symptoms of fever, cough, and shortness of breath, call your doctor's office or the Ministry of Health's COVID-19 hotline at 376-9350, 376-9387 or 376-9357 and a health professional will discuss your symptoms and determine the next steps. We will update on additional numbers which will be added."