loopnewsbarbados.com

Antigua and Barbuda records first case of the novel coronavirus

Dillon De Shong

2-3 minutes

Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda Gaston Browne announced today, Friday, that Antigua and Barbuda has recorded its first confirmed case of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

In an address to the nation, Browne called for citizens to remain calm as he noted the risk of transmission is low.

He said: "The person concerned is in self isolation at home and a regime has been put in place, today, not only to continue such isolation but to treat the condition."

The infected person is a woman, who arrived in Antigua on March 10, via a British Airways flight from the UK and she travelled directly to her mother's home after deplaning.

Browne said she started presenting symptoms on March 11.

The woman visited a private hospital where medical officials took samples that were sent to the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) lab in Trinidad for testing.

Browne assured that "no stone will be left unturned" as he noted health officials are tracking down anyone she may have met.

He revealed Antigua's sole quarantine facility will be up and running next week and testing equipment will arrive shortly after.

The Prime Minister has called on citizens to take precautionary measures such as hand washing, avoiding close physical contact and avoiding large groups.

"We must never panic but must work collectively with confidence and faith. I remain confident that with our collective efforts and with the help of God, we shall surmount the challenges of COVID-19 and this too shall pass."

Browne also advised citizens that another suspected case of COVID-19 returned negative.

Get the latest local and international news straight to your mobile phone for free: