Appendix B: Provincial Case Definitions for Diseases of Public Health Significance

Disease: Gastroenteritis Outbreaks in Institutions and Public Hospitals

Effective: May 2018
Disease

1.0 Provincial Reporting
Confirmed outbreaks

2.0 Type of Surveillance
Outbreak summary data

3.0 Case Classification

3.1 Confirmed Outbreak Definition

Two or more cases meeting the case definition with a common epidemiological link (e.g. specific unit or floor, same caregiver) with initial onset within a 48 hour period.

3.2 Suspect Outbreak Definition
If an outbreak is suspected, notify the local board of health to support with the investigation and management.

3.3 Case Definition
The case definition in an outbreak is dependent on the presenting signs and symptoms and circumstances. It may vary between outbreaks and also vary during an outbreak.

Symptoms must not be attributed to another cause (e.g. medication side effects, laxatives, diet or prior medical condition) and are not present or incubating upon admission and at least one of the following must be met:

- Two or more episodes of diarrhea (i.e. loose/watery bowel movements) 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.

4.0 Laboratory Evidence

4.1 Laboratory Confirmation

- Confirmation of an outbreak of gastroenteritis is not dependent on laboratory confirmation.
4.2 Approved/Validated Tests
- Given the variability of aetiologic agent, consult with laboratory about appropriate testing methodologies.

4.3 Indications and Limitations
- N/A

5.0 Clinical Evidence
Clinically compatible signs and symptoms depend upon aetiologic agent and may include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain or tenderness.

6.0 ICD Code(s)
ICD 10 Code A09A

7.0 Comments
- The board of health shall declare whether an outbreak is over, in consultation with the institution/facility. Rationale for declaring or not declaring an outbreak, and declaring an outbreak over should be documented.
- In the event of a disagreement between the institution and the MOH, the MOH has the authority to determine if an outbreak of a communicable disease exists, for purposes of exercising statutory powers under the Health Protection and Promotion Act. Once an outbreak is declared, it is reported to the Ministry through the integrated Public Health Information System (iPHIS).
- The board of health shall declare whether an outbreak is over, in consultation with the institution/facility. Rationale for declaring or not declaring an outbreak, and declaring an outbreak over should be documented.
- Issuing a media release to the public is the responsibility of the institution or health facility. Should there be a public health risk to the general population, a joint media alert may be issued, or the public health unit may issue an alert on behalf of the institution or health facility with their knowledge.
- For more information, please consult Investigation and Management of Infectious Diseases Outbreaks in the Infectious Disease Protocol, 2018 (or as current) and the Institution/Facility Outbreak Management Protocol, 2018 (or as current).

8.0 Sources

Ontario, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Recommendations for the Control of Gastroenteritis Outbreaks in Long-Term Care Homes. Toronto, ON: Queen’s Printer for Ontario; 2018. Available from:

9.0 Document History

Table 1: History of Revisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revision Date</th>
<th>Document Section</th>
<th>Description of Revisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 2015</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>New template.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Section 9.0 Document History added.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2015</td>
<td>1.0 Provincial Reporting</td>
<td>Added: “(non Clostridium difficile Infection (CDI) related outbreaks)”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2015</td>
<td>3.2 Suspected Outbreak Definition</td>
<td>Entire section added.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2015</td>
<td>7.0 Comments</td>
<td>Entire section revised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2015</td>
<td>8.0 Sources</td>
<td>Title of section revised from “References”. Sources updated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2015</td>
<td>1.0 Provincial Reporting</td>
<td>Removal of “(non Clostridium difficile Infection (CDI) related outbreaks)”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2018</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>Updates reflect changes to the Disease of Public Health Significance list and the addition of public hospitals, effective May 1, 2018.</td>
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