

**Ministry of Health
and Long-Term Care**

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Health workers and other health system partners

RE: Update on Human Cases of Avian Influenza A(H7N9) in China

DATE: February 6, 2014

Dear colleagues,

Since early 2014, there has been an increase in reported human cases of avian influenza A(H7N9) in China. For the latest updates on H7N9 virus, including the total number of cases and deaths, visit the World Health Organization's [Global Alert and Response website](#). China is also celebrating Chinese New Year (January 31 – February 14, 2014), which involves a tremendous amount of travel to and from, and within, China.

Although the risk remains low, health care providers should consider the possibility of avian influenza A(H7N9) virus infection in persons with respiratory illness that meet the exposure criteria in the [case definitions](#).

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care continues to maintain information for health workers on avian influenza A(H7N9) at www.ontario.ca/avianinfluenza, including recommendations on appropriate infection prevention & control measures. The Public Health Agency of Canada has posted updated health information for travelers about avian influenza A(H7N9) and (H5N1) on its [Travel Health Notice website](#).

In addition, the ministry continues to monitor cases of the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) and to maintain information for health workers on MERS-CoV at www.ontario.ca/novelcoronavirus.

The ministry is collaborating with Public Health Ontario to present a webinar to share information with staff from public health units and hospitals on MERS-CoV, avian influenza A(H7N9) and other emerging infectious respiratory diseases. The webinar is scheduled for February 11, 2014 from 12 – 1pm. To register, visit [Public Health Ontario's website](#).

As always, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is available to support health system partners during any urgent situations that may arise. The ministry can be reached at a 24/7 basis through the Health Care Provider Hotline at 1-866-212-2272.

Thank you very much,

Original signed by

Arlene King, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Chief Medical Officer of Health