



## PLP HS 202 Outbreak Management

### Management of Outbreaks

Infectious disease outbreaks may occur in the child care centre. A suspected outbreak exists when there is an increase in the baseline incidence indicating there are a higher than expected number of children and staff who are experiencing similar symptoms of illness. To determine whether a suspect outbreak exists, centre supervisors will:

- Review surveillance data, communication books or daily log.
- Identify similar symptoms of illness in children/staff.
- Check recent child/staff absenteeism records.
- Review and eliminate other possible reasons for symptoms (new medication or diet changes).

Centre Supervisors must report suspected outbreaks to Toronto Public Health Communicable Diseases Surveillance Unit (CDSU) at (416) 392-7411. The following information will be required:

- Date and time of the first case;
- Date and time of the most recent case;
- Total number of children and staff per room;
- Total number of ill children and staff per room;
- Signs or complaints of symptoms of illness (e.g. diarrhea, vomiting, fever);
- The control measures that have been implemented to date.

Once the outbreak has been reported, Park Lawn Preschool Inc. is required to:

- Follow all TPH recommendations and requirements;
- Provide TPH with the necessary information pertaining to children and staff;
- Facilitate the collection of stool specimens (after obtaining consent from a parent);
- Immediately report changes associated with the outbreak and provide updated information about the outbreak on a daily basis using the TPH Outbreak Line List; and
- Communicate necessary information to the families of children attending the centre. TPH will provide the child care centre with a letter for parents once an outbreak has been declared.

### *Outbreak Line-List Form*

Toronto Public Health will provide the centre supervisor with an outbreak line-list form to help collect information. A separate line list should be kept for children and staff, its purpose is to monitor the number of new cases that occur each day. Only new cases that fit the case definition shall be added to the line list.

- Line lists shall be updated daily and forwarded to TPH by noon each day or another mutually agreed upon time;
- Provide an updated list even if there are no new cases
- Advise TPH of any hospitalizations or deaths of line-listed cases (staff and/or children)

## **Investigating a Possible Source of an Outbreak**

During an investigation of an outbreak, Toronto Public Health may conduct food and child care inspections to ensure proper infection control measures are instituted to reduce the risk of transmission.

Toronto Public Health may also require specimen sampling. Stool specimens may be required if there is a high proportion of ill children and/or staff or if the symptoms are severe. Park Lawn Preschool Inc. must notify parents and obtain consent prior to submitting specimen samples to the Public Health Laboratory.

During the investigation process, the centre supervisor will contact ill staff and the parents of ill children were at home during the time before the outbreak was declared, to inform them of the outbreak and to determine if they are experiencing the same signs and symptoms. If so, their information will be added to the line list.

## **Control Measures**

Park Lawn Preschool Inc. shall communicate with staff, volunteers and parents what control measures have been implemented as a result of an Outbreak Management consult with Toronto Public Health. Park Lawn Preschool Inc. holds the responsibility to ensure that the agreed upon control measures are enforced.

In the event of an outbreak, ill children and staff are to be excluded from the child care centre. Children and staff may return to the child care centre when they have been symptom-free of vomiting and/or diarrhea for a minimum of 48 hours (or until other disease specific criteria has been met such as two negative stools taken 24 hours apart). Toronto Public health will give updated directions regarding exclusions as required.

Children, who become ill while attending the child care centre, shall be isolated from other children until a parent or guardian can take them home. Ill staff shall report all outbreak illness to their centre supervisor. All ill staff shall be advised that they are not to work at another day nursery until they have met the criteria established by Toronto Public Health.

During an outbreak, children and/or staff who have not been immunized must be excluded from the child care centre until the outbreak is declared over; this will minimize the risk of spreading the disease.

## **Additional control measures include, but are not limited to:**

- Reviewing and reinforcing hand hygiene practices, while providing all rooms with adequate supplies;
- Increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting of common areas, high touch surfaces and toys;
- Adjusting the concentration of disinfectant that is approved for use against the organism circulating during the outbreak (most likely norovirus);
- Suspending communal activities such as sensory play or baking activities;
- Reinforcing with staff, children and visitors the importance of keeping hands clean;

- Admissions can continue if the parent/guardian is aware of the outbreak and understands potential risks (as outline by TPH);
- The child care centre shall limit the movement of staff and children from room to room as much as possible;
- Donning PPE; staff shall use gloves where indicated (e.g. diapering, cleaning spills);
- Toilet and diaper routine shall be reviewed, including the proper use of gloves;
- Increasing (one or all) frequency, concentration or contact time of disinfectant;
- Ensuring change table is disinfected after each use (with an appropriate disinfectant) and infant/toddler's hands are washed. Refer to the TPH Information Sheet "Choosing and Using Disinfectant" or "Bleach Solutions for Disinfecting" for details regarding the strength of disinfecting solution to be used during outbreaks.

### **Communication with Parents**

When an outbreak is declared, Toronto Public Health will provide a letter to parents and advise them of the outbreak and what actions are necessary should their child become symptomatic.

Park Lawn Preschool Inc.'s centre supervisors will communicate with parents all controls measures in place at the child care centre.

### **Declaring the Outbreak Over**

An outbreak will be declared over when the child care centre is clear of new cases that meet the case definition for the period of communicability of the causative agent plus the incubation period.