In addition to seasonal influenza, Maine EMS and Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are monitoring an outbreak of pneumonia associated with a novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Wuhan City, China which was reported to the World Health Organization on December 31, 2019. The situation is evolving, but since then, there have been several hundred confirmed infections in China, with scattered cases in other Asian countries, as well as one confirmed case in the State of Washington and one in Illinois. At the time of this publication there is no reason to suspect a patient of having exposure to 2019-nCoV unless they have traveled to Wuhan City, China within the past 14 days or have interacted with a known or suspected 2019-nCoV patient.

Currently, there is limited information available to describe the degree to which the virus may be transmitted from person-to-person or the severity of the illness. Most patients with this illness have been reported to have fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. Care is supportive. There is no vaccine or specific treatment for this infection.

Based on recommendations from the U.S. CDC and the Maine CDC, we recommend the following:

1. Ask all patients about recent travel, particularly those with fever and respiratory illness;
2. Identify patients under investigation (PUIs) using the following criteria:
   a. Fever and symptoms of lower respiratory illness (cough, shortness of breath) and one of the following:
      i. History of travel to Wuhan City, China within 14 days of symptom onset; or
      ii. Close contact with a person who is being evaluated for 2019-nCoV while that person was ill.
   b. Fever or symptoms of lower respiratory illness (cough, shortness of breath) and close contact with an ill, laboratory-confirmed 2019-nCoV patient, within the last 14 days.
If you identify a PUI, please take the following steps:

1. EMS clinicians should use gown, gloves, eye protection, and airborne respiratory protection (fit-tested N-95 level or higher respirator);
2. Place a surgical (simple) mask on the patient;
3. Contact the receiving hospital prior to initiating the transport and utilize the term, “PUI for coronavirus” during the consultation;
4. Call Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821; and
5. Decontaminate the ambulance according to the attached recommendations

All clinicians should use quality handwashing techniques to help protect themselves and their patients. Maine EMS continues to emphasize the importance of clinicians obtaining influenza (flu) vaccinations. Individuals who are unable to receive a vaccination or refuse for any reason should be using appropriate personal protective equipment, such as using a mask while entering healthcare facilities and/or interacting with patients. Clinically permitting, all patients who are suspected of having the flu or flu-like illness should always wear a face mask at all times (e.g. transfer to the ambulance, during transport, and entering the healthcare facility). For more information regarding the influenza, please refer to Maine EMS Operational Bulletin 2019-10-25-03: *Influenza (Flu) Vaccinations and Community Flu Clinics* or go to maineflu.gov.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this emerging infectious disease. *Please be aware that the screening criteria for this novel coronavirus may change with time.* Maine EMS will provide updates as additional information comes available.

Attachments:

Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Overview for Maine EMS Clinicians (as of Jan. 24, 2020)
Consider Novel Coronavirus EMS Decision Poster
Due to the recent outbreak of a novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Wuhan City, China, Maine EMS urges all EMS clinicians to take the following actions:

1. Ask all patients about recent travel, particularly those with fever and acute respiratory illness;
2. Don appropriate PPE when patients meet the following Patient Under Investigation (PUI) criteria; and
3. If a patient meets PUI criteria, contact the receiving hospital before initiating transport, and utilize the term "PUI for coronavirus" when speaking with the staff; Contact Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821.

**Patient Under Investigation (PUI) Criteria**

**Clinical Features:**
- Fever AND symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g. cough, difficulty breathing)

**Epidemiologic Risk:**
- History of travel from Wuhan City, China, within 14 days of symptom onset
- Close contact with a person who is under investigation for 2019-nCoV while that person was ill within 14 days of symptom onset

**Clinical Features:**
- Fever OR symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g. cough, difficulty breathing)

**Epidemiologic Risk:**
- In the last 14 days, close contact with an ill, laboratory-confirmed 2019-nCoV patient

**PPE Recommendations:** If the patient meets PUI criteria, clinicians should don gloves, gowns, eye protection, and N-95 or equivalent respirators. A surgical mask, NOT an N-95, should be placed on the patient.

**Ambulance Decontamination:** Any visibly soiled surface must first be decontaminated using an EPA-registered hospital disinfectant according to directions on the label. Disinfect all potentially contaminated surfaces, including the stretcher, with an EPA-registered hospital disinfectant according to directions on the label. Medical equipment (stethoscope, BP cuff, etc.) making patient contact should be disposable or cleaned and disinfected using appropriate disinfectants before use on another patient.

References and Resources:

Note: Interim guidance, epidemiological risk area and other factors are subject to change.

Image Above: Colorized transmission electron micrograph MERS virus particles (blue) found near the periphery of an infected VERO E6 cell (yellow). Image captured and color-enhanced at the NIAID Integrated Research Facility in Fort Detrick, Maryland (NIAID)
CONSIDER Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

Patient Under Investigation (PUI) Criteria

Clinical Features:
Fever **AND** symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g. cough, difficulty breathing)

Epidemiologic Risk:
History of travel from Wuhan City, China, within 14 days of symptom onset

-or-

Close contact with a person who is under investigation for 2019-nCoV while that person was ill within 14 days of symptom onset

Clinical Features:
Fever **OR** symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g. cough, difficulty breathing)

Epidemiologic Risk:
In the last 14 days, close contact with an ill, laboratory-confirmed 2019-nCoV patient

If the PUI criteria above are met:

Isolate and place simple (surgical) mask on the patient

AND

Don appropriate PPE, including gloves, gown, eye protection, and N-95 mask or equivalent

AND

Notify the receiving hospital before initiating transport, utilizing the term "PUI for coronavirus" during the consult; Contact Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821

For More Information: