



Chantelle Anderson <cpanderson@mtroyal.ca>

Update on protocols around positive COVID-19 cases at MRU

1 message

Comms Update <commsupdate@mtroyal.ca>

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To: mru-allemployees <mru-allemployees@mtroyal.ca>

Sent to all employees on behalf of Trika Macdonald, Associate Vice-President, Human Resources

Welcome back, everyone. I hope you had a restful December break.

As we commence the Winter semester, I want to thank the entire MRU community for their patience and diligence as we worked through the many challenges the pandemic brought us throughout 2020. As a community, we did an amazing job of minimizing the spread and ensuring that the campus was as safe as it could be despite high numbers of positive cases within and around our city. I want to provide you with an update about campus protocols related to the pandemic.

When a member of our campus community discloses that they have tested positive for COVID-19, the Planning Ahead Team, Human Resources and Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) responds quickly to meet and exceed Alberta Health Services safety requirements to help prevent community spread. The EH&S team works with campus partners to:

- contact the individual who has tested positive
- conduct detailed contact tracing*, notifying all individuals who may have been exposed and advising them of the requirement to self-isolate for 14 days
- close off any rooms or spaces where exposure may have taken place
- post signage on exposed spaces to ensure no one enters before cleaning
- clean and sanitize all exposed areas

*Alberta Health Services has taken a conservative approach to contact tracing, so our EH&S team stepped forward in 2020 to conduct in-depth contact tracing whenever a positive case is identified. Individuals on campus who have been in close contact with an employee, contractor or student who has tested positive are quickly notified by EH&S to help prevent community spread. If an individual is not contacted by EH&S, it is reasonable to assume that they have not had contact with anyone on campus who has tested positive.

I recognize that some employees are seeking greater detail regarding positive COVID-19 cases on campus, however, MRU is mandated to follow Alberta's *Health Information Act* and must keep details of anyone's health diagnosis private and confidential. Individuals who have tested positive have expressed legitimate concerns about their private health information being shared publicly, so all of us at MRU must remember to honour privacy legislation whenever positive disclosures are made.

I can share with you that a total of 66 employees, contractors and students have reported testing positive for COVID-19. Of those 66 individuals, only 16 were physically on the Lincoln Park campus within the time frame required for notification through contact tracing.

Your willingness to follow MRU's enhanced protocols has created a safer campus for everyone. Throughout the pandemic, we have acted with diligence, often ahead of the public health measures imposed by the city and province. You will recall that we implemented a mandatory face mask requirement nearly two weeks

before it became a City of Calgary bylaw, and we encouraged a return to work-from-home before it was provincially mandated.

Even as the provincial government considers lifting some public health restrictions next week, MRU will continue to follow higher level health and safety protocols, adapting as things change.

As always, please visit mru.ca/COVID19 for the latest updates and resources.

Trika

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Please send any questions to covid19@mtroyal.ca.