

Severe Respiratory Illness (SRI)

Case Definition

Confirmed Case

A person admitted to hospital with:

- Respiratory symptoms, i.e., fever (over 38° Celsius) and new onset of (or exacerbation of chronic) cough or breathing difficulty

AND

Evidence of severe illness progression:

- Radiographic evidence of infiltrates consistent with pneumonia or acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS)^[1]

OR

- Complications such as encephalitis or other severe and life threatening complications

AND

- No alternate diagnosis with no response to treatment in the first 72 hours of hospitalization; (i.e., results of preliminary clinical and/or laboratory investigations^[2] within the first 72 hours of hospitalization with no response to treatment and cannot ascertain a diagnosis that reasonably explains the illness [i.e., have ruled out presence of a known viral or bacterial respiratory pathogen]).

OR

A deceased person with:

- A history of respiratory symptoms (including fever and new onset of [or exacerbation of chronic] cough or breathing difficulty) resulting in death

AND

- Autopsy findings consistent with the pathology of ARDS^[1] without an identifiable cause

AND

- No alternate diagnosis that reasonably explains the illness.

^[1] Documentation of evidence of ARDS should be noted on either the radiologist's or medical examiner's report.

^[2] It is suggested that laboratory investigation, including laboratory testing for influenza and other respiratory pathogens should be started as soon as possible upon presentation (i.e., do not wait 72 hours to initiate testing).

Reporting Requirements

1. Physicians

Physicians shall notify the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) (or designate) of all confirmed cases of SRI in the prescribed form using fastest means possible (FMP) i.e., direct voice communication.

2. Alberta Health Services

- The MOH (or designate) shall notify (as detailed in the Notice dated March 22, 2011) the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) (or designate) of all confirmed cases of SRI using FMP.
- The MOH (or designate) shall report in the prescribed form (as detailed in the Notice dated March 22, 2011) using the *Alberta Provincial Hospitalized Influenza and Severe Respiratory Illness (SRI) Report Form* of each confirmed SRI case to the CMOH (or designate) within 48 hours (two days) of notification. Completion of a case report form is required for each confirmed SRI case that required hospitalization whenever one may occur, year round.
- For out-of-zone reports within the province, the MOH (or designate) first notified shall notify the MOH (or designate) where the case resides using FMP.
- For out-of-province and out-of-country reports, the following information should be forwarded to the CMOH (or designate) using FMP including:
 - name,
 - date of birth,
 - out-of-province health care number,
 - out-of-province address and phone number,
 - attending physician (locally and out-of-province) and
 - positive laboratory report (faxed).