

Roles and Responsibilities

The Emergency Service Agency (police, fire, and ambulance):

- Appoints a Designated Officer and Alternate.
- Assesses work procedures for the potential risk of an occupational exposure to a communicable disease:
 - Implements a protocol for occupational exposures to specific emergency service.
 - Provides personal protective equipment (PPE) for employees.
 - Provides ongoing education and training for employees.
- Provides appropriate measures and procedures to minimize risks to the workers.
- Establishes a pre-exposure program that includes:
 - standards for all staff to receive recommended immunization.
 - personal protective equipment issued to all ESWs.
 - training and educating the ESWs so they know how to access the DO.
 - providing mask-fit testing for staff every two years.
- Establishes a post-exposure program that includes:
 - selecting and training a DO.
 - provision of first-aid and decontamination of an environment.
 - protocols to ensure appropriate medical follow-up for exposed ESWs.

The Emergency Service Worker:

- Works in compliance with workplace occupational health and safety programs.
- Maintains immunization status as recommended.
- Participates in regular training and education sessions on the prevention of communicable diseases.
- Wears personal protective equipment in all situations where there is a risk of a potential exposure.
- Reports possible exposures to DO in a timely manner.
- Follows through with initial medical care in the hospital, and follow-up surveillance and testing with family physician post-exposure.
- Participates in mask fit testing every two years.

The Designated Officer:

- Receives reports from the ESWs who believe they may have been exposed.
- Completes the documentation and takes the appropriate follow-up action.
- Assesses each report on a case-by-case basis to determine whether an exposure has occurred and provide reassurance to the worker based on the situation and circumstance.
- Determines if exposure is identified; if unsure call Public Health to consult with Communicable Disease Team, Medical Officer of Health or designate.
- Relays recommendations for post-exposure follow-up to any exposed ESW.
 - If exposure is identified, advises ESW to go to nearest Emergency Room or family physician for further assessment.
 - If exposure is not identified, provides ESW with education as to why it is not considered an exposure.
- Informs an ESW who has had contact with a communicable disease while on duty of the possible risk, and advises them to seek medical care.

The Grey Bruce Health Unit and Medical Officer of Health (or Designate):

- Provides DO and the Emergency Services with up-to-date information on communicable diseases.
- Provides consultation at the request of the DO following an assessment of a suspected exposure to help determine if a significant exposure has occurred.
- Contacts the DO for ESWs on duty who are contacts of a communicable disease, such as infectious pulmonary TB, meningococcal disease, invasive Group A strep, and viral haemorrhagic fevers.*
- Follows up on reportable communicable diseases when they are received.

*In the course of routine management for communicable disease, the Health Unit may receive a report of a communicable disease where there is concern that an ESW may have been exposed. This notification of possible exposure may come to the Health Unit from a variety of sources including physicians, laboratories or other health units.

1. The Health Unit will notify the DO of a possible exposure to the ESW.
2. The notification will include recommendations for action. It will not include disclosure of any information concerning the source of the infection to ensure confidentiality.
3. Proper documentation of the exposure is the responsibility of the DO and should be done on agency-specific forms. There is no requirement that these forms be forwarded to the Health Unit.

[Back to Designated Officer home page](#)