



Health

Media Release

Advice for parents ahead of school returning

27 January 2020

With students returning to school next week, parents of children who have had contact with a confirmed case of novel Coronavirus are being urged to keep their children at home and monitor for symptoms.

NSW Chief Health Officer, Dr Kerry Chant explained that any child who has been in contact with a person confirmed as having novel coronavirus must not attend school or childcare for 14 days after the last contact with the infected person.

“14 days represents the internationally recognised incubation period for the disease,” Dr Chant said.

“After this time the child is considered not to be at risk of infection.”

Students who have travelled to Wuhan and Hubei during the school holidays can return to school but should be carefully monitored for symptoms of coronavirus infection.

“The most common symptom is a fever,” Dr Chant said.

“Other symptoms include, cough, sore throat and shortness of breath.”

Anyone who exhibits these symptoms should be isolated immediately from other people and seek medical attention as soon as possible.

If you develop a fever, a cough, sore throat or shortness of breath within 14 days of travel to Hubei or contact with a person with confirmed coronavirus, you should immediately isolate yourself from other people. Contact your GP or your emergency department or call the healthdirect helpline 1800 022 222 and seek medical attention as soon as possible.

Minister for Health, Brad Hazzard explained that NSW Health has processes in place to identify any close contacts of cases confirmed in Australia.

“Advice about not attending school would be provided to these close contacts,” he said.

There are currently four confirmed cases of novel coronavirus in NSW. All cases had travelled to Wuhan, China or had contact with a confirmed case in China.

Parents with concerns can contact their local Public Health Unit on 1300 066 055 for advice or visit the dedicated NSW Health information page at

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>

NSW Department of Education has issued guidance to all NSW Schools, which included information to guide school staff in the event of a child becoming sick.