

Memorandum

To: Provincial Sport Organizations
From: Dr. Robert Strang, Chief Medical Officer of Health
Date: March 13th, 2020
Re: novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID19)
c: Jamie Ferguson, CEO, Sport Nova Scotia

I am writing again to provincial sport organizations with an update on the situation with the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) and the illness it causes COVID19.

COVID19 has now spread around the globe and is rapidly increasing in the USA and Canada. While there have been no cases of COVID19 in Nova Scotia to date, it is almost certain that we will get cases and community spread in the near future.

There is no vaccine or specific treatment for this virus therefore as we prepare for local spread, we need to focus on

- i) protective measures such as handwashing
- ii) steps to minimize the close contact between people (social distancing).

There is up-to-date information of personal protective measures, handwashing posters and a number of fact sheets at <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/>

Steps that sports teams and organizations should be considering at this time to support social distancing include:

- a) no handshakes, high fives or fist bumps
- b) minimizing close face-to-face contact during practices, games and in the change room
- c) no group social activities
- d) limit or stop spectators, especially for indoor sports/events

To limit the spread of COVID-19 to Nova Scotia at this time:

- a) sports teams and individual athletes should not travel outside of Nova Scotia for competitions or events;
- b) sports teams and individual athletes should not travel to Nova Scotia for competitions or events.

As this situation evolves it may be necessary to further restrict sports activities

More information on COVID19 is at <http://novascotia.ca/coronavirus>

Following the following routine prevention measures will help prevent the spread of to a common viruses and bacteria throughout the year:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand rub if water and soap are not available.
- Cough and sneeze into your elbow or a tissue. If using a tissue, immediately place it in a waste disposal and wash your hands.
- Limit touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- If at all possible, stay home when ill with acute respiratory symptoms; if this is not possible, limit close contact with others.
- Don't share items that may have saliva on them such as, drinking glasses and water bottles (**athletes should use their own, labeled, water bottle for workouts, practices and games**).
- Frequently clean surfaces like taps, doorknobs and countertops.
- Use of masks by the general public for respiratory illnesses such as influenza and COVID19 **have not** been shown to be effective in preventing virus spread and are not recommended for prevention.