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January 29, 2020

### **Coronavirus Infection Update**

Dear Future Care Clients,

Please refer to prior to updates for complete information.

We are now beginning to see some definite statistics. There are well over 6,000 cases reported, including many in countries outside of China. The case fatality rate appears to be about 2%. This means approximately two out of every 100 cases patients die. This compares to 10% with SARS and over 30% with MERS.

There has been definite person to person transmission reported outside of China. This falls into two groups. One is family clusters which is to be expected due to the close contact. This occurs when family members become sick from someone who has recently returned from China due to close sustained contact. There is also direct case to case transmission through more casual contact. Usually this requires a person to be within about 6 feet and the transmission is respiratory via droplets. This is important because in order to stop the outbreak health authorities are going to have to find all contacts of the cases, interview them, make sure that they do not become ill and are isolated at the earliest signs of any illness. Alternatively, some governments may elect to quarantine any contacts of sick individuals.

It appears that what is called the reproductive rate is 2.2 on average with a likely range of between 1.4 and 3.8. This means that everyone who is sick will infect an average of 2.2 other people. This makes the virus minimally to moderately communicable. As a comparison, measles is the most communicable virus with a reproductive rate of over 10.

The incubation period has been reported as approximately an average of five days with a general range of 4 to 7, but perhaps up to 12.5 days in some circumstances. This means that if someone is exposed, they will need to be aware that they can become sick for up to about seven days, perhaps longer. It may also guide decisions regarding how long to quarantine direct contacts. This is a very important number to watch. We will advise as more information is discovered regarding incubation periods.

It still does not appear the experts have a definitive answer on whether or not people who have no symptoms at all can spread the virus. This will also be critical.

While there is public discussion about a vaccine, realistically the outbreak will probably be over long before any vaccine is available and likely it would only be effective for people who are not yet ill.

At this writing there is still no specific treatment and it is doubtful there will be. All current treatment is supportive based upon symptoms, especially the degree of respiratory involvement.

There still have much to discover, so the most important thing is to stay informed for additional information, recommendations and guidelines.

Current recommendations:

- Do not travel to China.
- Do not bring crew directly from China onto any ship without determining where they came from, whether they have any fever or signs of illness and whether or not they have been exposed to anyone who has been ill with in the prior two weeks.
- Any crewmembers who become sick with any flu like illness after traveling or after exposure should be questioned extensively as for their travels and contacts. They should be taken off of the ship and directed to the nearest emergency department with a face mask and provide notification ahead of time to the emergency department.
- While the value is being question, a box or two of facemasks should be sent to all ships.

Remember that we are in the middle of a severe flu season and do not want to encourage panic over the coronavirus. Keep well aware of the number of cases in your country. For example, there are only five cases currently in the US. It is most likely that the increase in cases will only be seen, at least in the foreseeable future, in large entry cities were people have flown in such as Seattle, Los Angeles, Chicago and New York in the US.

For additional information please contact [physicians@futurecareinc.com](mailto:physicians@futurecareinc.com). To refer a specific crewmember medical incident please continue to email our Contact Center at <firstresponse@futurecareinc.com> .

Thank you.

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