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Public Service Announcement

Mandatory masking now in effect at Iqaluit Boarding Home and Qikiqtani General Hospital (QGH)

Start Date: **July 22, 2025**
End Date: **August 18, 2025**
Iqaluit, Nunavut **75 sec**

In response to the ongoing respiratory illness outbreak affecting Iqaluit and Pond Inlet, mandatory masking is now in effect at both the Qikiqtani General Hospital (QGH) and the Iqaluit boarding home. This measure is in place to protect vulnerable individuals in these settings who may be at risk of contracting pertussis (whooping cough).

To help prevent further spread, especially to vulnerable populations such as infants, masking is now required in these facilities until further notice. This decision is based on guidance from the Territorial Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) specialist and the CPHO office. Case and contact management of pertussis is ongoing.

Pertussis can affect anyone, but the most severe cases are in children under the age of one. It is a respiratory disease of the throat and lungs that spreads very easily from person to person, but it is preventable with immunization.

Residents should be aware of symptoms, as early diagnosis and treatment are important. Symptoms to watch out for:

- A cough that lasts longer than a week.
- A cough followed by an unusual sound like “whoop”.
- Trouble breathing.
- Vomiting after coughing.
- Coughing that is worse at night.
- A high fever (39°C and above) that lasts more than three days.

Those in Iqaluit who have symptoms should call Qikiqtani General Hospital to book an appointment or go to the Rapid Access Clinic to be assessed.

Free masks are available for pickup at Iqaluit Public Health at 1091 Mivvik Street. We thank all residents and visitors for their cooperation and understanding as we work together to protect our communities.

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Media Contact:

Charmaine Deogracias
Manager, Communications
Department of Health
867-975-5712
cdeogracias@gov.nu.ca

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