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June 17, 2003

## Communiqué on Healthcare Facility SARS Categories

As the outbreak has continued, facilities have identified that the process for applying the facility category tool requires some refinement.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care confirms the following:

1. The category definitions as outlined below continue to be appropriate.
2. Where there are well circumscribed areas (e.g., an area within a facility with no crossover of staff, no patient transfers in), subunits, or separate campuses, one part of the facility may be listed at a different category level from the overall facility.
3. The overall facility category may be lower than the subunit area when:
  - a) there is confidence that all identified at-risk individuals have been removed from the environment
  - b) a full and open consultation process has occurred and a consensus decision has been made by the facility (infection control and administration), the local public health department, the SARS Science Committee and the Hospital Branch, MOHLTC
4. If a “subunit” is category 3, the overall facility may only be one level lower (category 2).
5. When the overall facility category is lower than a designated area within its accountability, the facility will self identify at the lower category level and clearly specify the areas/subunits/separate campuses that are at a higher level.

## Healthcare Facility SARS Category Definitions

<b>SARS Category 0:</b>	Healthcare facility has no known cases of SARS (suspect or probable)
<b>SARS Category 1:</b>	No unprotected SARS exposure – staff and/or patients. Healthcare facility has one or more cases of SARS (suspect or probable).
<b>SARS Category 2:</b>	Any unprotected SARS exposure within the last 10 days but without transmission to staff or patients. The healthcare facility may or may not currently have one or more cases of SARS (suspect or probable).
<b>SARS Category 3:</b>	Unprotected SARS exposure with transmission to health care workers and/or patients. The healthcare facility may or may not currently have one or more cases of SARS (suspect or probable).