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Department of Health & Wellness

Communications on this subject should be addressed to:
Permanent Secretary

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May 15, 2020

Press Release

COVID-19 UPDATE: TESTING RESULTS CONTINUE TO BE NEGATIVE

As of May 14, 2020 the World Health Organization reported a total of 4, 248, 389 confirmed cases of COVID-19 globally with 292,046 deaths. There are now 1, 819, 553 confirmed cases in the region of the Americas. The affected region includes Barbados (85), Jamaica (507), Cuba (1810), Dominica (16), Grenada (21), Trinidad and Tobago (116), Guyana (113), Antigua and Barbuda (25), Bahamas (93), Saint Vincent and Grenadines (17), Guadeloupe (155), and Martinique (189).

The results for a batch of 59 samples for COVID-19 tests were received on May 15 and all of these 59 samples have tested negative. No positive results were received within this batch. The Ministry of Health is encouraged by the number of persons who are experiencing flu-like symptoms and are promptly seeking the care within our respiratory clinics. This positive health seeking behaviour by our citizens is one of the important actions that have helped in being effective in managing our national response to COVID-19. We remind everyone that a very clear pathway to care has been established in the event someone is experiencing respiratory illness. This includes the availability of the 311 hotline as well as the tele-medicine facility through which our physicians can be accessed. The community respiratory clinics and the respiratory care at the Victoria and St. Jude Hospitals continue to be available as a walk-in service. All these services are free to the user.

Since the documentation of Saint Lucia's first confirmed case of COVID-19 on March 13, 2020, a total of 18 confirmed cases have been recorded in country. All of these 18 cases have been

successfully taken into care within the national respiratory hospital and have responded well to treatment. All 18 have recovered and have been discharged from hospital.

With the establishment of in-country transmission came the establishment of physical distancing measures and the requirement to use masks when venturing into public places including banks, supermarkets and on public transport to name a few. These requirements are still in place. Having no recent record of additional confirmed cases in country is not to be seen as a reason to disregard these practices. Rather, it has been in part due to the general compliance of many individuals to the combined use of masks, physical distancing and other related infection prevention measures as well as their enforcement at the various establishments; we have been achieving headway with containing our national epidemic.

The Ministry of health asks everyone to remain proactive and maintain a high level of vigilance. Let us not only care for ourselves but let's take action to protect the health of those with whom we interact as we undertake our daily activities. It is imperative that we work together to keep our population safe. Every single one of us must take personal responsibility to facilitate the process.
Our requests to you continue to remain simple and inexpensive:

1. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use hand sanitizer where hand washing is not possible.
2. Cover your cough and sneeze.
3. Wear a home-made mask when going out.
4. Adhere to the 6 foot physical distancing guideline

Together, we can successfully combat COVID-19. The Ministry of Health will continue to provide regular updates to keep you informed.

For more information please contact the Office of the Chief Medical Officer or the Epidemiology Unit, at 468-5309/468-5317 respectively