



REMARKS BY:

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SENIORS,

THE HON. PATRICIA GORDON-PAMPLIN JP, MP

ON: An Update on the Gordon Ward, KEMH

1st March, 2013 at the

House of Assembly

Mr. Speaker,

I rise this morning to take the opportunity to update this Honourable House on the situation on Gordon Ward at the King Edward VII Memorial Hospital.

The Bermuda Hospitals Board communicated on Monday that it had implemented infection prevention measures on Gordon Ward, following an outbreak of vomiting and diarrhea.

The clinical diagnosis of the outbreak was gastroenteritis, and the outbreak had started with one patient. Over the course of the past weekend, eleven other patients, along with one visitor, three staff members and a medical officer were affected.

Infection prevention measures, including isolating patients, the use of disposable gowns, gloves and masks in all isolation rooms, enhanced cleaning, and restricting staff working on Gordon Ward from working in other areas of the Hospital were implemented.

On Monday the Ward was closed to all new admissions and transfers. Visitors were also asked to postpone their visit, unless it was urgent.

Mr. Speaker, the latest figures indicate that:

- A total of 16 patients have been impacted to date, eight of whom are no longer symptomatic.
- A total of 16 employees have been impacted to date, 11 of whom are no longer symptomatic.
- Gastroenteritis can be caused by many different organisms, but samples to date have tested negative for many of the common causes.

Individuals affected are recovering within 24 to 48 hours.

Mr. Speaker, it is **NOT** unusual for hospitals around the world to experience these kinds of outbreaks.

There are best-practice responses that are recognized to minimize the spread of the illness, and these were appropriately implemented at the Hospital.

I was pleased that the Bermuda Hospitals Board took the step to proactively notify the community about the situation on Gordon Ward -and they have continued to update the community throughout the week.

As I said earlier, gastroenteritis can be caused by many different organisms, but samples to date have tested negative for many of the common causes, so the investigation is continuing.

Individuals are responding positively to the treatment of their symptoms, and when the organism causing the gastroenteritis is identified the community will be informed.

The BHB has confirmed that infection prevention measures **are still** in place on Gordon Ward, and these measures will only be lifted when the ward is safe for new patients and visitors.

Thank you, **Mr. Speaker**.

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