

Quarantine & Screening Measures for SARS March to December 2003

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Quarantine Services**

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- Pre-SARS, the existing quarantine service was “downsized”
 - 24/7 national public health emergency Duty Officer Response system
 - During SARS 2003, a new service was initiated as part of response
 - Permanent Quarantine Service has evolved out of the SARS response

Health Canada's Phased Response

- Information Phase

March 18 to May 14, 2003

Yellow Cards	March 18	Inbound
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Cherry Cards	April 1	Outbound
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- Screening Phase

May 14 to July 5, 2003

- Special Measures Phase (Contact Tracing)

March 13 to July 5, 2003

Information

- March 17

Quarantine Officers deployed to Toronto and Vancouver

- Health Canada Nurses and Physicians

- Recruited from the ranks of Health Canada

- Conducted Visual screening

- Distributed Health Alert Notices (Yellow Cards)

- Intensive Public Health education

April 1, 2003

“Departure Nurses” to Toronto

- SARS transmission in Toronto
- Initially physicians and then six nurses deployed to Pearson Airport to support Quarantine Officers and response
- Cherry Health Alert Notices at check in counters
- Departure nurses Assessed PAX will symptoms of respiratory illness
- Public Health education to airline and airport staff

Departure Nurses

- Departure Nurses hired from NHQ, flown to Toronto, two from outside Toronto
- Did not compete for local Health Care resources
- Nurses hired and trained for SARS Emergency Phone Lines at NHQ

Skill Sets

- Excellent Assessment skills
- Experience in Community, Public Health, or Emergency Nursing
- Personal qualities for leadership, & PR
- Ability to Communicate effectively as a Health Educator

Special Measures (Contact Tracing)

March 13 to July 5, 2003

- Initial Contact tracing through passenger manifests by Travel Medicine group
- Overwhelmed
- Traveller Contact Information Forms (TCIFs) developed for better information collection

Data Collection

- By “DCCs” or “Data Collection Clerks”
- Collected TCIFs
- Helped PAX fill out forms
- Sorted forms by Flight
- Answered questions and referred problems to Quarantine Officers
- Initially 12 hired for Toronto and 8 for Vancouver

Mass Hiring

- Sought candidates referred by St. John Ambulance
- All had first aid training, experience with public
- Hiring through NHQ, but trained locally
- Role coordinated by an Office Administrator brought in from Regional Health Canada Offices in both locations

Screening Phase

- Distribution of Yellow Cards refined and expanded to incoming International Passengers
- Yellow cards asked the three WHO questions
- Thermal Scanners in Toronto and Vancouver
- In-Flight Videos

Increased Assessment Capacity Required

- Identification of PAX with symptoms of respiratory illness or fever demanded that HC have the staffing capacity to conduct the PAX assessments
- The departure Nurses transitioned to Screening Nurses

Screening Nurses

- Used hospital or Community College prepared Nurses for this role under the direction of the Quarantine Officers

Quarantine Officers

- Physician as Medical Officer (MOF) lead in Vancouver
- Unable to find the right candidate for MOF in Toronto
- Baccalaureate prepared Nurses functioning well as Quarantine Officers set standard for the emerging Quarantine Service

May 14, 2003

Thermal Scanners

- Six to both Pearson and Vancouver International Airports
- Health Canada rep on site to liaise with Airport Authority
- Posters explained process to public
- Inbound and Outbound PAX scanned

Thermal Scanners

- Operators would monitor the number of passengers passing through machine and number of passengers with elevated temperature
- All passengers who showed an elevated temperature were assessed by a Health Canada Nurse

Thermal Scanners

- Human Resource Intensive
- Machine Operators
- Compliance Monitors

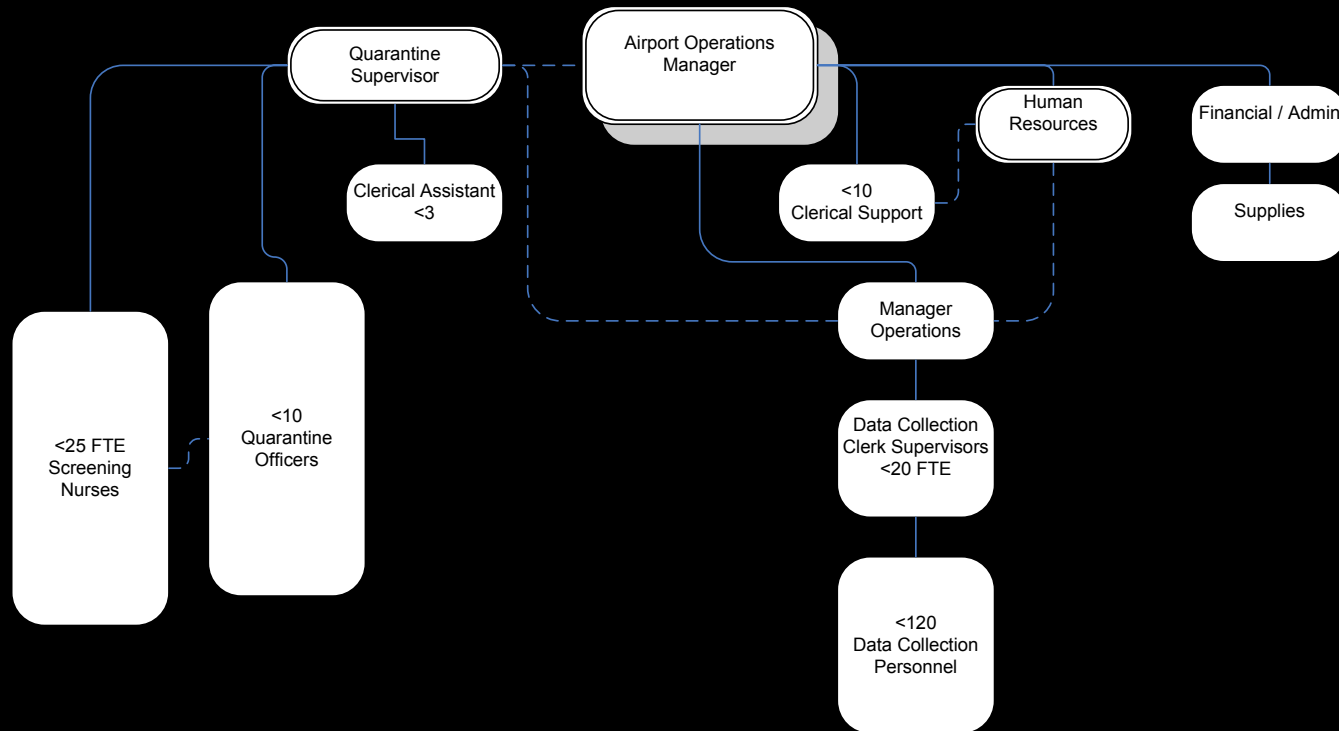
In Toronto

- ~155 Data Collection staff, and
- 55 nurses (25 FTE) hired as Screening Nurses

Infrastructure Required

- Site Operations Manager seconded for local Regional Health Canada Operations
- Support staff also required

SARS Airport Response / Toronto



Expansion of Airport Screening Project June 7, 2003

- Expansion of Quarantine Service and active screening with Yellow Card / Health Alert Notice use as the tool to four more international airports (Calgary, Ottawa, Dorval and Mirabel in Montreal)

Expansion of Airport Screening Project June 7, 2003

- Quarantine Officers hired for new Airports
- Clerical staff needs for Data Collection staffed through contracts with security guard firms like the Corps of Commissionaires

Benefits

A viable Quarantine Service

- Involved in local planning
- In a state of Preparedness and
- Ready to Respond

Lessons Learned

- Permanent Quarantine Service provides a Public Health response capacity with trained staff
- Hopefully will avoid Thermal Scanners
- Distribution of Health Alert Notices through airline

QO of the Future

- Public Health professional
- Excellent assessment and decision making skills
- Leadership and public relations abilities
- Good team player
- The Emergency Response personality

QO of the Future

- Enhanced preparation in
 - Infectious diseases
 - Epidemiology and Surveillance skills
 - Emergency planning and exercises
 - Incident Command & Emergency Planning

Thank You