

Some patients on dialysis from E. coli outbreak as families launch class-action suit against daycare operators ^[1]

Hospital units treating the mostly child patients have also increased their supply of dialysis machines, vital-signs monitors and IV pumps. AHS said the number of cases has risen to 142

Author: Kaufmann, Bill

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Excerpts

A few of a growing number of patients from a daycare E. coli outbreak are receiving dialysis treatments, Alberta Health Services said Friday.

That news came hours after a class-action lawsuit was filed against the operators of several daycares that were served by a single kitchen being investigated as the possible source for the infections, which on Friday numbered 142.

Of those, 26 are currently hospitalized, with 11 of those in more serious condition, some with hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS), a condition that affects the kidneys and causes blood clots.

“Dialysis machines have been brought in from other Alberta Health Services sites as well as rented to ensure we have adequate capacity now and in the coming days,” said Dr. Franco Rizzuti, AHS medical officer of health for the Calgary zone.

“All children on in-patient units are stable.”

Hospital units treating the mostly child patients have also increased their supply of vital-signs monitors and IV pumps, said the physician.

“This is all out of an abundance of caution, that should we see any more serious illnesses that we have everything needed,” said Rizzuti, adding he expects the case numbers to stabilize going into the weekend and next week.

One parent representing the class action; lawyer anticipates number of plaintiffs will grow

On Thursday, AHS said 128 people had tested positive for E. coli with 25 in hospital, nine of them suffering from HUS.

AHS says they were first made aware of bloody diarrhea symptoms from children at the daycares last Saturday and moved to close 11 daycare locations that had been served food from the same kitchen, Fueling Minds, that’s affiliated with Food For Brains daycare.

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Meanwhile, a class-action lawsuit was filed Friday at Court of King’s Bench, naming all of the daycares involved in the episode.

Currently, one parent is representing the class action “and we anticipate that number (of plaintiffs) will grow,” said Maia Tomljanovic, a partner with Cuming and Gillespie Lawyers.

“As a result of negligence, unsanitary and unsafe food storage, preparation and handling practises, it resulted in these students suffering.”

Source of outbreak hasn’t been identified, academy says

In a statement, the founders of Fueling Brains Academy said they were aware of the legal action but were focused on the unfolding situation facing their clients and staff.

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“The exact source of the outbreak has still not been identified and we are continuing to review our policies, procedures and sourcing related to food services for our facilities.”

Four of the locations that were closed as a precaution have had no instances of infection — Fueling Brains Bridgeland, Almond Branch, Little Oak Early Education and Brainer Academy — and can open Monday if no symptoms from their children arise.

The remaining daycares will be allowed to open Tuesday, but their students and staff will require medical clearance to attend and cannot be present at any other child-care facility, said Rizzuti.

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