

Pandemic Influenza H1N1 Information for Clinical Facilities

Background: Schools have resumed in Los Angeles County. Clinical facilities should anticipate increasing influenza activity in the community with the potential for rapid spread and high demand on health care services.

Actions requested

- 1) Public Health strongly advises all clinical facilities to prepare to implement their influenza response plans immediately. See *10 Actions Steps for Medical Offices and Outpatient Facilities*, at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/10steps.htm.
- 2) Strongly urge all staff (yourself included) to receive seasonal influenza vaccine now and H1N1 vaccine when available.
- 3) Provide information to the public on when to seek medical care. See *Home Care Guidance: Physician Directions to Patient/Parent* at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_homecare_directions.htm.
- 4) Review CDC guidance on antiviral use at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/recommendations.htm.
- 5) Specific recommendations for clinical facilities:
 - a. Plan for a patient surge and increased demands for your services. Consider using a telephone system to deliver messages to incoming callers about when to seek medical care at your facility, when to seek emergency care, and where to go for information about caring for a person with flu at home. See *Interim Guidance for H1N1 Flu (Swine Flu): Taking Care of a Sick Person in Your Home* at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_homecare.htm.
 - b. Be prepared to extend hours of operation to include telephone triage of patients during a community outbreak.
 - c. To control the spread of pandemic H1N1 influenza virus in your facility:
 - Post informational materials in waiting rooms (available at www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/HealthEd.htm).
 - Screen patients for signs and symptoms of febrile respiratory illness at entry to the facility.
 - Use separate waiting and exam rooms for possible pandemic H1N1 influenza patients.
 - Consider booking well-baby and other non-infectious patients during times of the day separate from when infectious patients are normally seen.
 - Offer surgical masks to symptomatic patients who are able to wear them (adult and pediatric sizes should be available).
 - Provide facial tissues as well as receptacles for their disposal.
 - Provide hand hygiene products in waiting areas and examination rooms.
 - Use N95 masks, gloves, gowns, and eye protection when entering the room of individuals with potential H1N1 infection. Updated infection control guidance from CA is available at www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Documents/CDPH-H1N1FluCRecOutpatient082009.pdf.

For more information on caring for patients

Interim Guidance for Clinicians on Identifying and Caring for Patients with Swine-origin Influenza A (H1N1) Virus Infection: www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/identifyingpatients.htm.

CDC H1N1 guidance: www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu.

LA County Department of Public Health H1N1 guidance: www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/h1n1.htm.