



Public Health Update- H1N1 Influenza

May 13, 2009

The Southern Nevada Health District received confirmation that five of its six pending samples tested positive for H1N1 influenza virus. This brings the total number of confirmed H1N1 influenza cases to 14 in Clark County. The samples were confirmed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the Southern Nevada Public Health Laboratory, which has received certification to verify test samples.

The newly confirmed cases include: a five-year-old girl, a seven-year-old boy, a 10-year-old boy, a 14-year-old boy, and a 45-year-old woman. All five had a mild form of the illness, three are fully recovered. None of the patients required hospitalization. One case did not meet the case definition and is not a confirmed H1N1 influenza case.

Most recently, the health district received confirmation that five school age children and two adults were infected with H1N1 influenza. All seven have recovered and none were hospitalized. Southern Nevada's first reported confirmed cases occurred in an 11-year-old boy who has recovered, and a 39-year-old woman who was hospitalized and has since been released.

Probable cases are defined as patients who have tested positive for influenza A virus infection but whose samples have not had confirmatory testing for the H1N1 virus. Samples were initially submitted to the CDC for confirmatory testing. However, the Nevada State Public Health Laboratory in Reno and Las Vegas each received CDC test kits to perform confirmatory testing and are certified to verify test results. To date, nearly 99 percent of probable H1N1 influenza cases were confirmed as positive through CDC testing.

Current recommendations to the public encourage good health habits to minimize the spread of influenza:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you get sick with influenza, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

Individuals who become ill with influenza-like symptoms, including fever, body aches, runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea may want to contact their health care provider. Only a health care provider can determine whether influenza testing or treatment is needed.

Updated information is available on the Southern Nevada Health District website, www.SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict.org as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention site, www.cdc.gov. In addition, the Nevada Helpline is available in English and Spanish, (1-866) 767-5038 or (702) 759-INFO (4636).