



Public Health Update- H1N1 Influenza

May 15, 2009

The Southern Nevada Health District received confirmation that seven additional samples tested positive for H1N1 influenza virus. This brings the total number of confirmed H1N1 influenza cases to 21 in Clark County. The newly confirmed cases include a 16-year-old boy, a 19-year-old man, a 24-year-old man, a 25-year-old woman, a 35-year-old man, and a 53-year-old woman, all of whom had a mild illness and none were hospitalized. A six-year-old boy was hospitalized with mild illness. Previously confirmed cases include 10 school-age children and four adults. None of these children required hospitalization and most have since recovered. One adult required hospitalization and has been released.

Initial testing recommendations were made to identify if H1N1 influenza virus was present in the community. As H1N1 influenza cases have been identified locally, the health district has adopted CDC-recommended testing protocols to test only hospitalized or seriously ill patients to track the virus' severity in the community. Some health care providers are continuing to test mildly ill patients for the flu. Several recently reported cases have illness onset dates prior to May 5.

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).