



NOVEL H1N1 INFLUENZA UPDATE

This is an evolving situation and the guidance presented here is subject to change.

PARTNERSHIPS: STATE LEVEL

SED and the State Department of Health (DOH) continue to work closely together on the development and dissemination of guidance on H1N1 influenza to schools. SED staff participate on two DOH workgroups: *Vaccination* and *Community Mitigation*; the latter includes two subgroups on *School Guidance* and *School Surveillance*.

PARTNERSHIPS: LOCAL LEVEL

Decisions regarding measures to take in response to identified cases of H1N1 influenza are at the discretion of local educators and health officials. School administrators are strongly encouraged to partner with the school district's medical director and their county department of health to address the H1N1 situation at the local level.

Decisions about local interventions will differ across communities and should be based on local goals, epidemiology, health care system capacity, feasibility and acceptability.

Reactive school dismissal is not recommended unless excessive absenteeism rates of students and/or staff make it impossible to maintain a normal functioning or a safe environment.

H1N1 VACCINATION

It is anticipated that the H1N1 vaccination will be available in limited quantities starting in mid-October and will be provided to states by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Children less than 10 years of age will need to receive 2 doses of vaccine approximately 28 days apart. Children 10 and older and adults will only need one dose.

The first priority groups to receive the vaccine have been identified by HHS and include pregnant women; people who live with or care for children less than 6 months of age; health care workers; children ages 6 months to 24 years; and adults age 25-64 years with an underlying health care condition. Additional groups will be offered the vaccination as more becomes available.

It is a local decision whether or not schools will be used as vaccination sites. The H1N1 vaccine is scheduled to be shipped to county departments of health and health care providers during the first week of October.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

The following recommendations were developed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to address H1N1 for the 2009-2010 school year (under conditions of similar severity as in Spring 2009).

- **Closely monitor influenza-like illness.** Work with your local health departments to report absenteeism and/or school dismissal on a daily basis.
- **Students and staff should stay home when sick.** Those with influenza like illness (ILI) should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever, or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines. They should stay home even if they are using antiviral drugs.

- **Students and staff who develop ILI symptoms while at school should be separated from others until they can be sent home.**
- **Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette are basic foundations of influenza prevention:** stay home when sick, wash hands frequently with soap and water, and cover noses and mouths with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or a shirt sleeve or elbow if no tissue is readily available).
- **School staff should routinely clean areas that students and staff touch** with the cleaners they typically use. Special cleaning with bleach and other non-detergent-based cleaners is not necessary.
- **People at high risk for influenza complications who become ill with influenza-like illness should speak with their health care provider as soon as possible.** People at high risk include those who are pregnant, have asthma or diabetes, have compromised immune systems, or have neuromuscular diseases.
- **Consideration of selective school dismissal:** Schools that have populations where all or most students are at high risk due to an underlying health condition may consider closing to better protect their students.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/RESOURCES

Centers for Disease Control (CDC):

Frequently updated information is available at http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/general_info.htm

Guidance documents for schools and colleges are available at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/>

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services:

<http://www.flu.gov/>

New York City Department of Mental Health and Hygiene:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/flu/flu.shtml>

New York State Department of Health:

http://www.nyhealth.gov/diseases/communicable/influenza/seasonal/swine_flu/

Telephone hotline: 1-800-808-1987 (New York City residents: call 311)

Local County Health Departments:

Links and contact information is available at <http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/lhu/map.htm>

New York State Education Department: <http://usny.nysed.gov/swine-flu-info.html>

District/School Administrator inquires: Office of Student Support Services: 518-486-6080