

Important Health Notice

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Information for Healthcare Professionals

UPDATE

This Important Health Notice (IHN) provides the following:

- Update to the human swine influenza situation
- Health care provider reporting requirements to public health regarding patients with influenza like illness (ILI)
- Notice of change to the *Clinical Guidelines on the Management of Patients with ILI in Ambulatory Settings* (April 28, 2009)

Status Update:

On April 29th, 2009 the World Health Organization (WHO) escalated the pandemic threat level to Phase Five, which is characterized by human-to-human spread of the virus into at least two countries in one WHO region.

In Canada, 19 confirmed cases have been announced, including seven cases in Ontario, four cases in Nova Scotia, six cases in British Columbia and two cases in Alberta.

Health Care Provider Reporting Requirements to Public Health

Clinicians are advised to promptly report all cases of ILI with a travel history to Mexico or contact with a case of swine flu in the last 7 days to the local public health unit.

The following patient information is to be reported by phone as soon as possible to public health:

- Name (first, last)
- Date of birth
- Sex
- Date of symptom onset

Highlights:

- **The WHO has raised its pandemic alert level to Phase 5**
- **Individual cases of ILI with a history of travel to Mexico or contact with a confirmed case of swine flu should be reported to the local public health unit as soon as possible once assessment and laboratory testing for swine influenza A has been done**
- **Notice of change to *Clinical Guidelines on the Management of Patients with ILI in Ambulatory Settings***

- Hospitalized or outpatient
- Upper respiratory tract infection or lower respiratory tract infection/pneumonia
- Other major symptoms (e.g. Gastroenteritis)
- Travel location

Given the rapidly changing information known about the swine flu virus and its impact, it is expected that this requirement will change frequently.

Notice of change to the *Clinical Guidelines on the Management of Patients with ILI in Ambulatory Settings* (April 28, 2009)

A change has been made to section 3 (Laboratory Testing) of the *Clinical Guidelines on the Management of Patients with ILI in Ambulatory Settings*, posted yesterday on the ministry's website.

For patients presenting with ILI* and a history of travel to Mexico or contact with a confirmed case within 7 days of onset of symptoms, a nasopharyngeal swab can be sent to the Toronto or regional public health laboratory. Please do not send specimens directly to the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg.

* Acute onset of fever and new/worse cough or shortness of breath; additional symptoms may include sore throat, arthralgia, myalgia, headache or prostration. In children under 5, gastrointestinal symptoms may also be present.

For questions on Important Health Notices, please call the Healthcare Providers Hotline toll free, at 1-866-212-2272. Hours of operation of the line are 0800 hours to 2000 hours. Refer to future IHNs for changes to hours of operation. To register for future Important Health Notices, please go to www.publichealthontario.ca.

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