

October 5, 2009
Information Bulletin 09-14

All Providers

Information and Resources in the Event of Pandemic Flu or H1N1 Disease Outbreak

Purpose: The purpose of this bulletin is to provide general information and resources relating to seasonal or H1N1 flu to health care providers licensed or regulated by Compliance Monitoring at the Minnesota Department of Health.

MDH has developed a web page related to the flu for Long Term Care Providers where important information and updates will be posted. This will include information such as case definitions, vaccinations, testing and treatment, infection control policies and procedures, as well as links to other important information and resources. Providers can subscribe to receive an email when the pages are updated. You can view the page and information on subscribing at: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/flu/ltc/index.html>

As additional questions and concerns arise please send them to us via email at: health.cm-web@state.mn.us or by phone to 651-201-4101. We will answer them as best as we can, keeping in mind that some questions may need to be addressed and resolved on a case by case basis depending on the situation and individual circumstances at the time.

This bulletin addresses the following questions:

- 1. What should I be doing now to prepare and plan for a flu outbreak?**
- 2. Who do I contact if I am impacted by an outbreak and need help with addressing shortages of staff, supplies and other resources?**
- 3. Where do I obtain general information on infection control procedures during flu?**
- 4. Who do I contact about questions related to licensing or CMS regulations?**
- 5. Where do I find information about emergency procedures as outlined by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services?**

1. What should I be doing now to prepare and plan for a flu outbreak?

Some of the steps you can take now are:

- Educate staff and clients regarding seasonal flu and H1N1. Current H1N1 and flu information can be found at: www.mdhflu.com.
- Review and reinforce infection control procedures. Information on infection control in flu outbreak can be found at: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/flu/hcp/ic/index.html>.
- Encourage staff to obtain seasonal and H1N1 flu vaccinations when available. Encourage staff to develop personal family emergency plans.
- Identify staff roles and determine alternate staff role possibilities.
- Update internal communications plans to reach staff and external communications plans to reach clients and families.
- Determine resources required to continue care/services to home care clients and develop emergency staffing plans for clients that require continued services or cannot be left on their own. Review with clients their personal emergency preparedness plan.
- Identify other similar medical providers within the community and determine if there can be shared resources and or staff.
- Stay in touch with your city or county local public health agency. They will be working with MDH on planning and needs related to flu in your city or county. They are a critical resource in health emergencies.
- Subscribe to Long-term Care Influenza Information on the MDH web to get an e-mail when new long-term care influenza information is posted. You can find that link at: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/flu/ltc/index.html>.

Preparation checklists, toolkits, and guidelines that will assist healthcare providers and service organizations in planning for a pandemic outbreak can be found at: <http://www.flu.gov/plan/healthcare/index.html>. Additional emergency planning information and resources are available from the Office of Emergency Preparedness at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/oep/index.html>.

2. Who do I contact if I am impacted by an outbreak and need help with addressing shortages of staff, supplies and other resources?

Contact the Public Health Preparedness or Healthcare Preparedness Consultant in your region. This person can direct you to local public health or other resources. Contact information is available at: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/oep/contact/teamsregions.html>.

3. Where do I obtain general information on infection control procedures during flu?

Information on infection control is available at:

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/flu/hcp/ic/index.html>

4. Who do I contact about questions related to licensing or CMS regulations?

Call Compliance Monitoring at 651-201-4101 or email your questions to health.cm-web@state.mn.us.

We plan to post the frequently asked questions (FAQ) on the flu web pages for LTC Providers at:

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/flu/ltc/index.html>.

Please check those pages to see if the answer to your question has already been posted.

5. Where do I find information about emergency procedures as outlined by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services?

General information about emergency preparedness:

http://www.cms.hhs.gov/SurveyCertEmergPrep/03_HealthCareProviderGuidance.asp#TopOfPage

Frequently asked questions in the event of an emergency:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/SurveyCertEmergPrep/Downloads/AllHazardsFAQs.pdf>

CMS information specific to H1N1:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/H1N1/>

If you have any questions related to this Information Bulletin, please contact:

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