



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
P.O. Box 3378  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

June 29, 2009

**MEDICAL ADVISORY: Focused Novel H1N1 Case Investigations and Community Mitigation**

Dear Hawai'i Healthcare Provider,

As community transmission of both seasonal and novel influenza A(H1N1) continues in Hawai'i, the Hawai'i Department of Health (HDOH) has focused case investigations based on the previously advised influenza testing prioritization schema listed below to determine any potential change in the severity of illness caused by the novel H1N1 virus.

**Novel Influenza A(H1N1) Testing Prioritization**<sup>1</sup>

Includes persons who fulfill **influenza-like illness (ILI)** criteria of fever  $\geq 100$  °F [37.8 °C] AND cough or sore throat in the absence of another known etiology and are in at least one of the following categories:

- Severely ill and require hospitalization
- Are part of a HDOH disease outbreak investigation
- Work in high risk occupations, e.g. health care workers engaged in direct patient care
- Have a history of travel outside the United States in the 10 days preceding illness onset
- Potentially at high risk for complications<sup>2</sup>

HDOH investigators will only follow-up on cases that have been indicated as fulfilling one of the above criteria with the exception of high risk individuals; these will be flagged and investigated only if they also fulfill one of the previous four criteria. Contrary to previous operations, HDOH investigators will contact the treating clinician of record only for cases investigated. **Clinicians are advised to clearly indicate on laboratory submission forms reason for novel H1N1 testing priority.**

Routine influenza testing and typing (i.e., to determine A vs. B) remains available at commercial laboratories and may facilitate clinical judgment in determining whether patients have influenza in general. HDOH reminds providers to promote to your patients as well practice yourselves the following measures proven effective in reducing influenza transmission.

**Recommended Measures to Reduce Influenza Transmission**

For all patients who fulfill ILI criteria, the following is advised:

- **Exclusion from work or school for 7 days or 24 hours post resolution of fever without antipyretic, or whichever is longer, regardless of antiviral treatment**<sup>3</sup>
- Frequent hand washing or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizing gel
- Covering their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing

<sup>1</sup> Influenza Sentinel Network Providers should continue testing based on routine Sentinel Surveillance protocols.

<sup>2</sup> Age <5 or >64 years; have chronic pulmonary (e.g. asthma), cardiovascular (except hypertension), renal, hepatic, hematological (includes sickle cell disease), neurologic, neuromuscular, or metabolic (e.g. diabetes) disorders; immunosuppressed (e.g. secondary to medication or HIV; pregnant; age <19 years and on chronic aspirin therapy; or chronic care facilities residents).

<sup>3</sup> There are little and conflicting data to support otherwise; time period may be shortened only if proven negative for influenza by RT-PCR or an etiology other than influenza is laboratory confirmed.

Medical Advisory

June 29, 2009

If you have questions about or need to report a suspect case that meets priority criteria, please contact HDOH at the numbers below:

O‘ahu (Disease Investigation Branch) ..... (808) 586-4586  
Maui District Health Office ..... (808) 984-8213  
Kaua‘i District Health Office..... (808) 241-3563  
Big Island District Health Office (Hilo) ..... (808) 933-0912  
Big Island District Health Office (Kona)..... (808) 322-4877

After hours on O‘ahu ..... (808) 566-5049  
After hours on neighbor islands..... 1(800) 360-2575 (toll free)

We appreciate the partnership with the medical community in facilitating case investigation of novel H1N1 cases of interest and community mitigation of both seasonal influenza and novel influenza A (H1N1) infections in Hawai‘i.

Sincerely,



Sarah Y. Park, MD, FAAP  
State Epidemiologist