



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

LORETTA J. FUDDY, A.C.S.W., M.P.H.
DIRECTOR
Phone: (808) 586-4410
Fax: (808) 586-4444

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**FIRST INFLUENZA-RELATED CHILD DEATH IN HAWAII
REPORTED FOR 2012-2013 FLU SEASON**

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) has confirmed the state’s first flu-related pediatric death during the current flu season. The individual was a four-year-old female who passed away in a Honolulu hospital on Jan. 20, 2013.

“This is an uncommon and tragic death,” said Dr. Sarah Park, state epidemiologist. “Not every child will become this seriously ill from the flu; however, it is a wake-up call for everyone to protect themselves and their loved ones against the flu. The flu vaccine is still the best method of protection and recommended for everyone six months of age and older.”

Flu activity in Hawaii is still considered low when compared with mainland states. Information on where to get a flu vaccination is available at <http://www.flu.hawaii.gov/VaccineLocator.html> or by calling 2-1-1. It is recommended that people call ahead to make appointments for vaccination as late season demand has affected vaccine availability. Other methods for reducing the spread of flu include: washing hands often with soap and water, covering coughs and sneezes, and staying at home when you are sick. For more information on the flu go to: <http://flu.hawaii.gov/>

The seasonal flu is one of many illnesses that are prevented through vaccination. Vaccinating each child born in the United States in a given year following the current childhood immunization schedule could prevent approximately 42,000 deaths and 20 million cases of disease.

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For more information on this news release, contact:
Gail Ogawa
Disease Outbreak Control Division
Phone: (808) 586-8358