

West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources

H1N1 Communication Points

August 18, 2009

The following key communication points are provided to assist you with media contact and to ensure consistent messaging.

- Influenza illness, including illness associated with the novel 2009-H1N1 influenza virus, is ongoing in West Virginia and throughout the United States.
- As of August 14, 2009, a total of 7,511 novel 2009-H1N1 influenza hospitalizations, and 477 deaths have been reported to the CDC by state and local public health departments.
- Forty-one counties in West Virginia report H1N1 activity.
- As of August 12, 344 laboratory confirmed cases of H1N1 have been reported in West Virginia. Of those laboratory confirmed cases, 23 cases resulted in hospitalizations. There have been no deaths attributed to H1N1 in West Virginia.
- It is important to note that while 344 cases have been laboratory confirmed, the numbers are not an accurate estimate of the cases or amount of disease circulating in West Virginia.

Since there are no identifiable strains of seasonal influenza circulating at this time, individuals who visit the physician's office with flu-like illness are being considered H1N1 positive and treated accordingly. All patients are NOT being laboratory tested for H1N1. Some instances may require H1N1 laboratory testing, but most are not at this time.

- The CDC estimates that between April and June 2009, more than 1 million cases of novel 2009-H1N1 flu occurred in the United States.
- Novel 2009-H1N1 influenza viruses now make up more than 97% of all sub-typed influenza A viruses analyzed by the U.S. WHO/NREVSS collaborating laboratories.
- 3 influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported to the CDC between June 14 and August 1, 2009. These deaths occurred in Arizona, Mississippi and Utah. All were associated with novel 2009-H1N1 flu.

- Since September 28, 2008, the CDC has received 101 reports of laboratory confirmed influenza-associated pediatric deaths that occurred during the 2008-09 influenza season, 33 of which were due to novel 2009-H1N1 influenza virus infections.
- The CDC anticipates that novel 2009-H1N1 influenza viruses will co-circulate with regular seasonal influenza viruses over our influenza season.
- West Virginia residents are encouraged to continue to use good personal hygiene practices such as thorough hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, and discarding used tissues to help reduce H1N1 transmission. Individuals who are ill are encouraged to stay home from school and work until their condition improves.
- The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources in Charleston continues to monitor the situation through the Office of Epidemiology and Prevention Services. Regular updates are posted on the department's website at www.wvdhhr.org
- The timing, spread and severity of novel 2009-H1N1 virus – in addition to our regular seasonal influenza viruses - are uncertain.
- H1N1 vaccine is expected in the fall. Guidance and directives for administering the vaccine will be developed by the CDC. The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health will communicate the guidelines for administering the vaccine to the local health departments.
- **Additional information is available on the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources website at www.wvdhhr.org or by visiting the CDC website at www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/**