

# COUNTY OF NEVADA

## HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

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### **H1N1 Influenza (Swine Flu) Update – May 1, 2009**

On April 22<sup>nd</sup> the federal Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced the confirmation of the first two US identified human cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) virus, both from California. Since that time over 140 confirmed cases with one death have been reported in 18 other states, with many additional states reporting suspected and probable cases. In California, we currently have 17 confirmed cases in five counties (including Sacramento), with another 55 probable cases being reported from 11 additional counties. The World Health Organization (WHO) reports a total of 365 cases worldwide in thirteen countries in Europe, Asia, and Australasia (New Zealand). It has confirmed 156 cases with nine deaths in Mexico. In Nevada County, we have not yet confirmed a case, although we are awaiting lab results involving a number of local individuals who have been tested.

The swine flu is a new flu virus which people have little or no immunity to. It is currently spreading from person-to-person. At this time, we do not know how serious it will be or how long it will last. As more people become infected, the risk of exposure to the public becomes greater. While more cases and hospitalizations are expected in the coming days and weeks, it must be noted that at this time, this influenza appears to be no more severe than the typical seasonal flu and can be treated with two commercial antiviral medications, Tamiflu and Relenza.

The World Health Organization recently raised its Pandemic Flu Alert level to the second highest level, Phase 5, which means that there exists human to human spread of infection in at least two countries within one WHO region. Both the federal Department of Health and Human Services and our state governor have declared a State of Public Health Emergency to increase preparedness activities and begin the process of freeing up stockpiles of medical equipment and medications to address the current outbreak.

On a local level we have mobilized the Public Health Department's Departmental Operations Center, to intensify our planning and preparedness activities, in accordance with our updated Pandemic Influenza Plan. The Center is in operation from 8 am to 5 pm daily, and conducts daily briefings involving both our Interim Public Health Officer, Dr. Ken Cutler, and our County Office of Emergency Services Program Manager, Vic Ferrera. Other relevant activities conducted to date have included:

- Participation in daily calls with both the CDC and the State Department of Public Health (DPH)
- Increase in surveillance activities, including the gathering and monitoring of data from local schools, laboratories, health care providers and hospitals
- Procurement of our state allocation of antiviral medications for local use and distribution to key local providers
- Distribution to medical providers of CDC and State DPH guidelines and recommendations regarding disease signs and symptoms, treatment and prevention
- Development and distribution of press releases
- Posting of critical updates and prevention information on our county website
- Creation of a "warm" telephone line (tel. # 265-7258) with updated general information for the public
- Facilitation of the procurement and distribution of test kits to community medical providers.
- Provision of assistance with the collection/ transport of specimen samples to regional and state public health labs
- Briefing of the Emergency Services Council on the current status of the outbreak and sharing of the most current recommendations from the CDC and State DPH
- Organization of a Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) teleconference in both Eastern and Western county to share information with medical providers, pharmacies and school officials to be conducted on Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup>

Our Public Health Department continues to work closely on a daily basis with state and federal health authorities and will be implementing additional actions to address this outbreak as required.