

## Galveston County Health Alert Network

### HAN Health Advisory

#### Novel Influenza A H1N1 Virus (Swine Flu)

#### Interim Guidance for Clinicians on Exclusion of Patients from School (K-12) or Child Care Programs

Novel influenza A H1N1 virus (swine flu) continues to circulate in Galveston County area. In general, persons with novel influenza A H1N1 virus infection should be considered potentially infectious from one day before to seven days following illness onset. Children might be contagious for longer periods, therefore at this time, CDC recommends the primary means to reduce spread of influenza in schools (K-12) and child care programs focus on early identification of ill students and staff, staying home when ill, and good cough and hand hygiene etiquette.

**Any student, faculty or staff member with influenza-like illness (ILI) – defined as fever > 100.4° F AND sore throat or cough:**

- **should be suspected of having novel influenza A H1N1 virus (swine flu) infection (unless an alternative diagnosis can be definitively established)**

**AND**

- **should be instructed to stay home and not attend school or child care programs, or go into the community except to seek medical care for at least seven (7) days after onset of symptoms or 24 hours after symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.**

Healthcare providers are reminded that there is continually updated information and clinical guidance regarding Novel Influenza A H1N1 (swine flu) on the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention website at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>.

Healthcare providers caring for patients hospitalized with severe febrile respiratory influenza-like illness should contact their local health department for coordination of epidemiological investigation and submission of specimens to the Houston Department of Health & Human Services Laboratory Response Network laboratory.

#### **Categories of Health Alert messages:**

**Health Alert:** conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action

or attention.

**Health Advisory:** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

**Health Update:** provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

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