



Facsimile Cover Sheet /Wharangi Nama Waea

Date/Te Ra: **4 July 2012**

To/Kia: GP's, Practice nurses at Primary Care Centres, After-hours Centres, Wellington Free Ambulance staff, Pharmacists, the Emergency Department and Hospital Staff in the greater Wellington and Wairarapa regions.	From/Na: Dr Annette Nesdale Medical Officer of Health Regional Public Health
Name of Agency/Wahi Mahi:	Fax Number/Nama Waea:

Be Alert for Influenza Outbreaks in Long Term Care Facilities

Influenza cases are being identified across the region and Regional Public Health has been advised of 1 confirmed and 2 probable influenza outbreaks in residential and health care facilities in the greater Wellington region. I would be grateful if you could distribute the following information, on the identification and management of institutional outbreaks, to relevant staff in your organisation. This information has also been sent to the residential and health care facilities in the greater Wellington region.

It is also important to maintain your vigilance for meningococcal disease which often occurs when there has been a lot of respiratory illness in the community.

If you would also like to receive this by email for ease of distribution, storage and retrieval please advise RPH of your email on rph@huttvalleydhb.org.nz.

Kind regards,

Dr Annette Nesdale
Medical Officer of Health

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He ture no nga korero katoa kei roto o tenei karere, no reira, kia tupato. Mehemea kaore matau kaua e mau. Me whakamohiotia atu ki to Tari, me te mea nana i tono mai. E Tika Hoki.

Date: 4 July 2012

**Public Health Alert
from the Medical Officer of Health**

Influenza advice for residential and health care facilities in the Hutt Valley, Wellington and Wairarapa

Regional Public Health has been advised of one confirmed and two probable influenza outbreaks in residential and health care facilities in the region. The following advice is to assist in identifying and managing an outbreak in your facility:

Influenza Vaccination: Encourage all unvaccinated staff and residents to be vaccinated.

Hand Hygiene: Put up posters to remind staff and visitors about hand hygiene, provide alcohol hand gel at points of entry and ask visitors with symptoms not to visit while unwell

Has this person got 'flu (influenza-like illness)?

Influenza-like illness is:

FEVER : Temp greater than 38°C or a history of chills/sweats, **however remember that in the elderly and frail temperature may only be minimally raised or not at all,**

with COUGH or SORE THROAT

The elderly may have mild or less typical symptoms so encourage staff to report changes in usual behaviour – **if in doubt, talk to your GP.**

Seek medical advice early: Antiviral medication (oseltamivir) as treatment has restricted benefit, unless started within 24 hours of symptom onset. Identify and treat secondary bacterial infections.

Suspected 'flu outbreak

Droplet precautions apply when caring for people with influenza like illness. This means staff wear a surgical mask in the room, (the mask should be removed outside of the room and put in a yellow bag for clinical waste) frequent use of hand gel and frequent surface cleaning. Gloves are necessary when cleaning up blood or body fluids including sputum.

- Isolate unwell residents that are in single rooms: use droplet precautions, have dedicated staff
- If the unwell person is in a shared room they should be moved to isolation if possible and the other residents should be closely observed for signs of ILI.
- Ensure everyone (staff, residents and visitors) have good hand hygiene and practise cough and sneeze etiquette.
- Notify Public Health if you suspect an outbreak.*
- Start a sickness log.
- Put up a sign on the front door advising of 'flu in the facility.
- Keep staff, residents and families informed.

Unwell staff

- Ask the staff member to practice cough etiquette and to go home as soon as possible.
- Staff should remain at home until they have no significant symptoms or their doctor feels they are no longer infectious.

Provide information

Promote messages about preventing the spread of 'flu and the importance of vaccination. If you would like written resources on influenza, standard precautions, hand hygiene etc to display or give to staff and residents please call 04 570 9002 and ask for the resource centre.

***Call Regional Public Health if you think you may have an ILI outbreak**

- 3 staff or residents unwell with influenza-like illness within 48 hours; or,
- 4 staff or residents within seven days

Phone 04 570 9002 - let us know you're calling from a rest home or care facility with a suspected outbreak so you can be directed the correct person.

Laboratory testing

Discuss laboratory testing (influenza virus PCR) of a few ill people with the on-call Microbiologist/ on-call Medical Officer of Health.

For specific Community Infection Prevention and Control advice contact:

CCDHB	Carolyn Clissold	04 9186515 or 027 292 8031
	James Robertson	04 3855999 extn 6613 or 027 297 2446
	Viv McEnnis	04 3855999 extn 6514 or 027 297 2813
	Donna Ashton	04 3855999 extn 6515
Hutt Valley DHB	Jane Pryer	04 570 9405
	Sarah Harris	04 570 9069
Wairarapa DHB	Lizzy Daniels	06 946 9800
	Suzy Rogers	06 946 9800

Kind regards



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