

Site-Based Influenza Reference Guide

Updated September 24, 2009

The following information provides school and office site activities in response to pandemic, or wide-spread, influenza and supports the District's Pandemic Response Plan. The information in this guide was developed in collaboration with the Nevada Rural Health Center (NVRHC).

General Information

Influenza – According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), influenza, or flu, is a contagious viral respiratory disease, spread primarily person-to-person through the coughing or sneezing of an infected person. H1N1 influenza A is a new viral strain.

Symptoms of influenza

- Fever
- Chills
- Body aches
- Headache
- Possibly diarrhea or vomiting
- Cough
- Fatigue
- Sore throat
- Nasal congestion
- May worsen underlying medical conditions

Prevention

- Practice the ABCs of good health habits:
 - **Avoid** touching your mouth, nose or eyes with your hands, avoid close contact with people who are ill, and do not share items such as eating utensils, drinking glasses and towels.
 - **Be** sure to wash your hands thoroughly and frequently with soap and water; alcohol based hand sanitizer is also effective.
 - **Cover** coughs and sneezes with the bend of your elbow or a tissue that is then disposed of in a trash receptacle.
- Practice other good health habits, such as eating a balanced diet, getting plenty of sleep and exercising regularly.
- The NVRHC recommends that most people get a flu shot when medically indicated and when the seasonal flu vaccine is available.
- Stay home when ill, especially when there is fever; per the CDC, may return 24 hours after fever is no longer present, without the use of anti-fever medication.

School Protocols

To assist in the District's monitoring of the situation as well as follow up with specific situations, principals and other administrators can use the following guidelines provided for each circumstance.

Parent or guardian reports a student absent due to flu (diagnosed or signs/symptoms):

- Attendance clerk or designee notifies office personnel of absence.
- Request student stay home for 24 hours after fever ends, without use of fever medication.
- No exclusion of siblings unless symptomatic.
- No requirement for additional cleaning; no use of masks.
- No letters to staff or parents, unless approved by the Instruction Unit; no reporting to NVRHC unless clustering or increased cases (see "Student or staff member sick at school" below).

Staff member calls in ill with flu (diagnosed or signs/symptoms):

- May return to work after fever free for 24 hours without the use of anti-fever medication
- No need for other staff members or students to be tested
- No letters to staff or parents; no reporting to NVRHC

Student or staff member sick at school (or district office) with influenza-like illness:

- Move the person to the school office and isolate as able until he/she can be sent home. Follow District first aid guidelines regarding sending ill students home on bus.
- No special cleaning required; no masks required.
- After five or more concurrent reports of influenza-like illness, especially with fever, report information to the school secretary, who will notify NVRHC for further tracking.

Monitoring and School Office Surveillance

Absences

- See above "School Protocols".
- Attendance clerks and back-up/designees receiving parent calls regarding absences will monitor totals.

Office Procedures:

- Students and staff exhibiting signs/symptoms of influenza will be sent home.
- When student presents with fever and influenza like illness:
 - When feasible, students with signs/symptoms of influenza will be separated from other students by a distance of at least 6 feet, while awaiting pick-up by parent/guardian. (Office personnel will maintain sensitivity by quietly moving ill students without discussing the reason.)
- For five or more students/staff with fever or reporting fever and influenza-like illness, office personnel will monitor and track cases (by teacher in each school). Office secretaries will provide on-going reports to the NVRHC designee.

Office Visits

- Educate staff regarding unnecessary student visits to the office. Unnecessary visits may expose students and staff to various contagious diseases.
- Teachers should attempt to problem solve with students before sending to Office.

Vaccine Administration

- At this time, there is no indication by the NVRHC that schools will be used as community-wide points of distribution (PODs) for vaccines.

Education/Communication on Influenza

- Posters/flyers have been sent to all schools.
- www.eureka.k12.nv.us provides fact sheets, and FAQs and will be used for updates as new information and details become available.
- Parent letters and/or communications through school website will be utilized for school-specific information.
- Other resources for information include the Nevada State Health Division's site, www.flu.nv.gov.