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Glen Ellyn School District 41

Superintendent Dr. Ann K. Riebock

May 4, 2009

Swine Flu message from Glen Ellyn School District 41

The first case of swine flu was confirmed in DuPage County on May 1. A number of schools in the suburban area have closed as part of an effort to limit the spread of the disease. Closing school is a serious decision that is made in consultation with public health officials. District 41 schools remain open with no reason to consider closure at this time. We hope that closure does not become necessary; however, it makes sense to be prepared, and we encourage our families to have a childcare plan in place should school closure occur. We are working with the Regional Office of Education and the DuPage County Health Department, both of which are key resources in protecting student health. The most important things parents can do are to **keep sick children home**, and to **reinforce proper hygiene and health habits**. Here are some key points to know:

- Swine flu is similar to seasonal respiratory flu, is caused by a virus, and is spread person-to-person through coughing or sneezing. People may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth, nose, or eyes.
- If you report your child absent due to illness, **please call the school absence line and let the school know if your child has any flu-like symptoms** such as fever, lethargy, lack of appetite, and coughing. Reported swine flu symptoms also include runny nose/nasal congestion, sore throat, cough, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.
- We are monitoring student health closely, and **you may receive a call** from school personnel requesting clarification or further information about your child's illness.
- If your child becomes ill with any of the flu-like symptoms above, **please keep him or her at home for a full seven days**. If your child returns to school and seems ill, he or she will be sent to the school nurse and likely sent home.
- We are stressing sanitation and hygiene at school and providing multiple opportunities for children to wash their hands, especially before lunch. Hand-sanitizing wipes are available throughout our schools. The custodial staff has stepped up its cleaning process, using recommended products and cleaning doorknobs, handrails and other high-touch surfaces more frequently.

Prevention is our Number One message. Please take the following health advice seriously, practice it yourself and communicate it to your children.

- Avoid close contact with anyone who is sick. Wash your hands thoroughly and frequently with soap and running water for 15-20 seconds. Friction under running water is the most effective part of hand-washing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are an alternative when out and about.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Dispose of used tissues promptly and properly. If you do not have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your sleeve.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth to minimize the spread of germs.
- Don't share eating or drinking utensils or containers.

For updates from the health department, visit www.protectdupage.org. For general questions about H1N1 flu, please call your medical provider or the DuPage County Health Department at 630-682-7400.



DUPAGE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

111 North County Farm Road, Wheaton, Illinois 60187

(630) 682-7400

www.dupagehealth.org

May 3, 2009

Dear DuPage County School Community and Families:

At the DuPage County Health Department, we are continually monitoring and staying up to date with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance. Our current and future recommendations regarding school dismissal are in accordance with CDC guidance, most recently updated on May 1, 2009 at 4:35 PM ET. Our recommendations for intervention take into account these guidelines alongside local data we are gathering and analyzing from each DuPage County school.

The presence of H1N1 influenza (swine flu) is confirmed within DuPage County, and we anticipate the number of individuals getting sick with H1N1 flu will increase. However, the illness at this time is a relatively mild form that is currently responding to the antiviral medications recommended for treatment by CDC (Tamiflu® or Relenza®).

We are adopting prevention and control strategies toward reducing the health impact of H1N1 flu within our communities. We have developed a system of analysis and response based upon triggers, that when identified, will guide Health Department interventions and recommendations for school actions.

This process will continue to change as the situation evolves and more information and understanding of the disease process is revealed. Specifically, CDC has advised that additional school guidance will be provided by Friday, May 8, 2009. We will continue to work closely with school officials to protect the health of students, staff, families, and surrounding communities with ongoing evaluation and response based on each school's circumstances.

For updates, please visit the DuPage County Health Department Emergency Information webpage at www.protectdupage.org. For general questions about swine flu, please call the DuPage County Health Department at 630-682-7400.

Thank you for your ongoing cooperation and support.

Sincerely,

THE DUPAGE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Rashmi Chugh, M.D., M.P.H.
Medical Officer

Maureen McHugh
Executive Director

Everyone, Everywhere, Everyday

In an emergency go to www.protectdupage.org and tune into WDCB 90.9 fm radio.