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## HEALTH ALERT

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TO: HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

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565-4567

SUBJECT: Influenza A (H1N1) Swine Origin Influenza Virus – Revised Testing Guidelines

DATE: May 7, 2009

### Sonoma County Situation Report

National and State epidemiologic data will not be included in Sonoma County Health Alerts as this information is available from other sources. <http://ww2.cdph.ca.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

As of today, Sonoma County has one confirmed A/H1N1 case and one probable A/H1N1 case that has been sent to the state lab for confirmatory testing. Final results are expected in the next day or two. The second case, still probable, involves a 5 year old girl who traveled to Mexico and became ill prior to her return home. Her symptoms were consistent with other cases, fever > 100° and cough and sore throat. She is recovering at home. Fortunately, the young girl did not attend public school or a group child care setting. Public Health Disease Control and Surveillance staff continue to monitor current cases and any new probable cases.

As of today, the Sonoma County Public Health Lab has tested 318 specimens for influenza viruses, resulting in 6 human type A influenza (1 H1 and 5 H3 strains) and one A/H1N1 influenza. The current probable case was tested at an alternate lab. Important new testing guidance is provided below.

The Department of Health Services has been polling all local hospitals on a daily basis after regarding influenza-like illness activity in the ED and as admitting diagnosis. These daily polls will be discontinued after Friday May 8<sup>th</sup>. Should hospitals or providers notice unusual seasonal activity of respiratory or influenza like illness, they are asked to contact the Sonoma County Public Health Disease Control and Surveillance provider line at 565-4566.

### **\*\*NEW\*\* May 7, 2009 Updated Testing Guidance for Sonoma County:**

#### **Updated Prioritization of Influenza Testing**

Sonoma County is discontinuing enhanced surveillance testing for A/H1N1. Those tests already submitted to the Public Health lab will be performed as part of the enhanced surveillance program. Testing services at the Public Health lab remain available for diagnostic purposes. **Normal lab fees for real time PCR respiratory specimens will apply.** For more information, please contact the Public Health lab at 565-4711.

#### **Testing should be limited to persons who:**

- 1) require hospitalization or
- 2) are at high-risk for severe disease complications (as listed below) or
- 3) are direct care health care providers with influenza-like illness

Currently, insufficient data are available to determine who is at higher risk for complications of novel influenza A/H1N1 virus infection. Thus, at this time, the same age and risk groups who are at higher risk for seasonal influenza complications should also be considered at higher risk for swine-origin influenza complications.

**Groups at higher risk for seasonal influenza complications include:**

- Children less than 5 years old;
- Persons aged 65 years or older;
- Children and adolescents (less than 18 years) who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy and who might be at risk for experiencing Reye syndrome after influenza virus infection;
- Pregnant women;
- Adults and children who have chronic pulmonary, cardiovascular, hepatic, hematological, neurologic, neuromuscular, or metabolic disorders;
- Adults and children who have immunosuppression (including immunosuppression caused by medications or by HIV);
- Residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities

To test for novel A/H1N1 influenza virus, upper respiratory specimens, such as a nasopharyngeal swab or aspirate, nasal swab plus a throat swab or nasal wash, or tracheal aspirate should be collected.

**Rapid tests for influenza are not recommended** due to a high number of false negative rapid tests in A/H1N1 specimens. Directions for proper specimen collection and submittal to the Public Health lab are available in a document dated April 28<sup>th</sup> on the Public Health website:

[http://www.sonoma-county.org/health/ph/phpreparedness/pdf/swineflu\\_testing.pdf](http://www.sonoma-county.org/health/ph/phpreparedness/pdf/swineflu_testing.pdf)

**Note:** Please follow the guidance in this document for prioritization of who should be tested, rather than the guidance in the April 28<sup>th</sup> lab document.

Additional guidance for A/H1N1 regarding treatment, prophylaxis, and distribution of antivirals is available in a Health Alert dated May 4, 2009 and can be found at:

<http://www.sonoma-county.org/healthproviders>

For further information please refer to:

Public Health Phone - Recorded answers to FAQs in English/Spanish:---565.4477

State Hotline - Recorded answers to FAQs in many languages:-----888.865.0564

Sonoma County Public Health Web Site:-----[www.sonoma-county.org/health/ph/](http://www.sonoma-county.org/health/ph/)

CDC Web Site:-----[www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/)

California Department of Public Health-----[www.cdph.ca.gov](http://www.cdph.ca.gov)