



News Release

GN closely monitoring flu outbreak to ensure Nunavummiut are protected

IQALUIT, Nunavut (April 28, 2009) - The Department of Health and Social Services has been closely monitoring the outbreak of swine flu in Mexico, the United States and Canada.

Cases of the swine flu, or H1N1 Influenza A, reported earlier this week in Mexico and the United States have now been confirmed in British Columbia and Nova Scotia. To date, all cases reported in Canada have been mild and have not required hospitalization.

Nunavut has circulated updated information about this outbreak on a regular basis to our health care staff throughout the Territory, and has instituted active surveillance of any persons presenting with an influenza-like illness who has recently returned from Mexico and the United States.

“There have been, to date, no reported confirmed or suspected cases of Human Swine Influenza in Nunavut,” says Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH), Dr. Isaac Sobol.

Sobol says that symptoms of swine flu are similar to seasonal flu including headache, chills, cough, followed by fever, loss of appetite, muscle ache, and runny nose.

Individuals recently returned from Mexico and the United States who have any of the above symptoms should remain in their homes, avoid physical contact with others as much as possible, and notify their local health centre about their travel history and current illness, in order to receive advice and follow-up.

Sobol is advising Nunavummiut to follow routine hygiene measures. General practices such as washing your hands with soap and warm water, covering your mouth and nose with your elbow when you cough or sneeze, and staying home if you are ill, can help reduce the transmission of most viruses, including Human Swine Influenza.

Although the Canadians who have been diagnosed with swine influenza exhibited mild symptoms, Nunavut, in partnership with the Public Health Agency of Canada and all other provinces and territories, remains vigilant and continues to monitor the situation closely to detect any illness as early as possible and ensure Canadians are protected.

The Department of Health and Social Services is continuing to work closely with its partners and will issue public updates as they become available and / or necessary.

-- 30 --

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