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Munarhiliqiyikkut Inuuhiriknirmullu

Department of Health and Social Services

Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

Media Update Re: H1N1 Flu Virus Situation Update – As of August 5, 2009 - 1:00 PM:

- Nunavut remains vigilant in tracking the progress of the H1N1 virus. Since Nunavut's first
 case was confirmed on May 28, the Department of Health and Social Services has
 confirmed 496 cases of H1N1. Of the total cases, approximately 53% are from the Kivalliq
 Region, 30% are from the Kitikmeot Region, and 17% are from the Baffin (Qikiqtaaluk)
 Region.
- There are currently two (2) patients with confirmed cases of H1N1 being treated in hospital. The vast majority of individuals suffering with flu symptoms are recovering, or have recovered, at home.
- There have been 31 additional cases confirmed since our last update of July 29th. As expected, the majority of new cases are in the Baffin (Qikiqtaaluk) Region which confirms the spread of H1N1 to all regions in the territory.
- No Health Centers have been closed due to H1N1. However in order to limit the spread of flu-like illnesses, Health Centres will occasionally postpone wellness clinics and other nonurgent services as required.
- Certain individuals may be at higher risk of complications if they are infected with H1N1. This "higher risk" group includes:
 - o adults and children with chronic conditions such as diabetes, cancer and chronic heart and/or lung conditions.
 - o pregnant women.
- It is important that **pregnant women** and adults and children with chronic conditions such as **diabetes**, **cancer and chronic heart and/or lung conditions** call the health centre as soon as they start experiencing flu symptoms for advice. Early treatment for H1N1 can help lower the risk of complications for higher risk patients. However, the treatment must be given within the <u>first 48 hours</u> of when flu symptoms begin.
- Unless the symptoms are severe or the patient has other medical conditions, staying at home and resting is often the best and fastest way to get better. The Department reminds all people to <u>call</u> their local health centre or hospital for advice rather than going directly to the health centre or hospital.
- Symptoms of the flu include fever and cough, runny nose, sore throat, body aches, tired, don't feel like eating, sick in the stomach, and in some cases, throwing-up or diarrhea.

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- All Nunavummiut, whether in a higher risk group or not, should take steps to protect themselves and their families against the flu:
 - Stay in your house if you have flu symptoms, but call your local health centre for advice.
 - Call your health centre immediately if you are in a high risk group and feel like you are getting the flu.
 - Stay away from crowded places if you are in a high risk group flu can be more easily spread where lots of people are gathered together.
 - Wash your hands often and thoroughly or use hand sanitizer.
 - Keep areas in your home (like counter tops and door handles, as well as items shared by family members) clean and disinfected.
 - o Cough and sneeze in your arm, not your hand.
 - o Get your flu shot every fall.
- All types of the flu should be taken seriously. People need to take the same steps to stop
 the spread of the flu, no matter where they live, work or visit. To learn more about the flu,
 call your local health centre or visit www.fightflu.ca

For more information contact:

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