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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 June 19<sup>th</sup> - 1:00 PM:

- Since our last update on June 18<sup>th</sup>, the Department of Health and Social Services has confirmed one
  additional case of the H1N1 virus bringing the total number of confirmed cases in Nunavut to 204. Of
  our total cases, approximately 54% are from the Kitikmeot Region, 44% are from the Kivalliq Region,
  and 2% are from the Baffin (Qikiqtaaluk) Region.
- There have been 21 patients with confirmed cases of H1N1 treated in hospital. Fifteen of those 19 have recovered and are no longer hospitalized. Health Centres in the affected communities continue to report that the number of patients they are seeing with flu-like illness is decreasing. The vast majority of individuals suffering with flu symptoms are recovering, or have recovered, at home.
- The Department <u>IS NOT</u> recommending the closure of schools, daycares or businesses.
  - If children or employees are sick with flu symptoms, they should stay in their house and phone
    the health centre for treatment advice. This is the same advice for all types of the flu and the
    best way to stop its spread.
  - In schools, daycares, homes, and businesses, the flu virus can be killed by standard household disinfectants.
  - The Department recommends that business owners and managers keep employee and public washrooms stocked with soap and paper towels at all times.
- The Department reminds people who have flu symptoms to **PHONE** their local health centre or hospital for advice rather than going directly to the health centre or hospital. People with flu-like symptoms should stay in their house and use the telephone to call for advice. 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.
- The Department also reminds people that not all individuals suffering from flu-like symptoms will be tested for the H1N1 virus. Increased testing was only done to determine the spread of the virus in Nunavut. Testing is not needed because the treatment for H1N1 is the same as for other flu viruses.
- In preparation for upcoming community events across the territory such as Canada Day and Nunavut Day, the Department is supporting local communities and event organizers to prevent the spread of the flu virus.
  - Community health staff including public health nurses, community nurses, community health representatives, environmental health officers, public health inspectors, etc. – will be providing hand sanitizer; flu prevention handouts; and prevention, hand-washing, and respiratory hygiene posters.
- In a small number of communities with significant flu activity, some community events have been
  postponed to help stop the spread of the flu and to allow for full community participation. These
  decisions have been made by event organizers and community leaders.

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- Local and senior health officials are available to discuss public health considerations related to individual events and activities with community leaders and event organizers as needed or requested.
- Consistent with the approach of the World Health Organization, the Government of Canada and other
  jurisdictions throughout Canada, there are no H1N1 related travel advisories or restrictions in
  Nunavut.

## To stop the spread of the flu:

To stop the spread of the flu:

- Wash your hands often in warm, soapy water or by using hand sanitizer.
- Cough and sneeze in your arm.
- Stay in your house if you experience any of the symptoms of the flu. If you think you are getting worse, CALL your community health centre.

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

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