

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release May 30, 2009

Department of Health and Social Services Government of Nunavut

IQALUIT – On May 29, 2009, three additional Nunavut cases of the H1N1 flu virus were lab-confirmed. As of today, May 30, 2009 there are a total of four cases in Nunavut. The cases are not connected and are not from a single community.

Three of the four individuals have been admitted to the paediatric ward of Stanton Territorial Hospital in Yellowknife and are recovering.

"I want to remind Nunavummiut that most cases of H1N1 flu virus in Canada have been mild to date and there is no increased health risk to communities," said Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Isaac Sobol.

The individuals' home communities will not be released in order to protect their identities and that of their families. As with any public health issue, should there be a risk which requires community identification the Department of Health and Social Services will release that information.

"Even though there were no confirmed cases until this week, we have been continuing our H1N1 flu virus surveillance throughout the territory using established public health practices," said Dr. Sobol.

Across Canada new cases of lab-confirmed H1N1 flu virus are being reported on a daily basis. Between May 27 and May 29, 2009 there were 218 new cases reported on the Public Health Agency of Canada web site. As of May 29, 2009 there are 1,338 lab-confirmed cases of the virus in Canada – not including Nunavut's three new cases.

"It is important that people take the same precautions that we advise them to during any flu season," said Sobol. "You can help stop the spread of influenza by washing their hands often with soap and warm water or alcohol-based hand cleanser, staying home if you feel sick, and covering your mouth and nose with your sleeve when you cough or sneeze."

The symptoms of H1N1 virus include fever, fatigue, lack of appetite, coughing and sore throat. Some people with the H1N1 virus have also reported vomiting and diarrhea.

If you experience these symptoms it is important to stay at home until you feel better – get lots of rest and drink lots of fluids. If symptoms get worse, and only you can judge, CALL your community health centre for further advice.

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