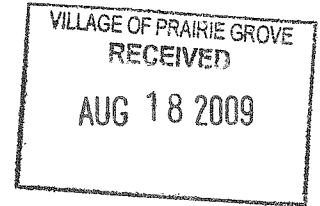


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**McHENRY COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER**  
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Public Health Administrator

August 14, 2009

Dear Mr. Breseman:

News about the novel H1N1 virus (also known as Swine Flu) has begun resurfacing in the mainstream media over the last several weeks. As you may be aware, cases of H1N1 continue to emerge throughout the United States, with the CDC estimating the number at over a million.

Throughout the summer, we have continued to pay close attention to H1N1 developments and plan for the likelihood of resurgence of the virus this fall. I would like to bring you up to date on what we know about the current situation, what we are anticipating, and how we are planning for this fall.

**CURRENT SITUATION**

- On June 11, the World Health Organization declared that we are at Pandemic Level 6.
- Worldwide, there have been 162,380 confirmed cases and 1154 deaths attributed to H1N1. In the United States, the number of hospitalizations stands at 6506 with the number of deaths at 436.
- Effective July 24<sup>th</sup>, the CDC ceased keeping count of new cases in the United States
- The southern hemisphere is at the height of the flu season, with major outbreaks occurring in countries such as the U.K., Argentina and Chile.
- Although the virus has remained relatively mild for most people, there is a great deal of concern because it has targeted pregnant women, the chronically ill, and young people at a higher than usual rate.
- The number of deaths attributed to H1N1 has been significantly higher for pregnant women and young people.
- A second wave of the virus is beginning to appear in Mexico

**WHAT WE ANTICIPATE**

- There will be a dramatic increase (a second wave) in the number of H1N1 infections after school starts this fall.
- The media will begin stepping up its reporting about H1N1, leading to intensified concern on the part of the public.

**MCDH**

- A national H1N1 vaccination campaign will be launched this fall. The vaccination campaign will most likely begin in October, although it could be earlier or later depending on vaccine availability.
- Because the following groups are at higher risk virus complications, the first populations to receive the vaccine will include
  - pregnant women,
  - persons between the ages of 6 months and 24 years,
  - those who care for infants younger than 6 months,
  - people from 25 to 64 years who have chronic health or compromised immune disorders,
  - healthcare and emergency medical service workers
- Depending on vaccine availability, the above list is expected to be expanded or contracted.

## PLANNING

Even though MCDH has begun planning for this effort, the large scale of the vaccination campaign means that help is required from many sectors of McHenry County. During the coming months, MCDH will be requesting assistance from some of our partners in the community. In the interim, listed below are some of the things you can do to help:

- Encourage friends, family, and co-workers to get the annual flu vaccine.
- Continue to be aware of facts about H1N1 and dispel misinformation. The CDC is a good source of information and can be found at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).
- Provide information on prevention steps that everyone can take, including: **cover your cough, wash hands frequently, and stay home if you are ill.**
- Provide hand gel at easily accessible locations for staff, coworkers, customers and clients.
- Put up posters reminding staff and clients about hand washing and covering their cough. These may be obtained from the Health department or downloaded from the health department website at [www.mcdh.info](http://www.mcdh.info).
- Become familiar with the mcdh website, as frequent updates will be posted during the flu season.
- To address potential staffing concerns, encourage friends and coworkers to think about developing contingency plans if family members become ill.

As information becomes available, we will continue to communicate with you.

Best Regards,



Patrick McNulty  
McHenry County Department of Health Administrator