

November 22, 2017

Attention: Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Hospitals, Emergency Rooms/Infection Control/Occupational Health, Walk-In Clinics, Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, EMS, Corrections

RE: FIRST CASE OF INFLUENZA IN HKPR AREA

The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit has received notification of our first laboratory-confirmed case of influenza for the 2017/2018 season. Influenza should be suspected in patients with the following signs and symptoms: cough, fever, sore throat, runny nose or sneezing, swollen or tender glands in the neck (cervical lymphadenopathy), malaise, myalgia, loss of appetite, headache, fatigue, or chills. In the elderly, fever may be absent or be manifested as an abnormal temperature for the individual (temperature $\leq 35.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ or $\geq 37.5^{\circ}\text{C}$). Children may present with nausea and vomiting, though these symptoms are not common in adults with influenza. Advise your patients who have influenza-like illness that they are infectious for up to five days after the onset of their illness. **Children are infectious for up to seven days.** Patients who have influenza-like illness should stay home during the infectious period.

Please refer to the Public Health Ontario Lababstract - Fall and Winter of 2017-2018 for the testing algorithm https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/LAB_SD_121_Respiratory_Viral_Testing_Algorithm_and_Enhanced_Surveillance_Update.pdf.

Recommendations:

- Ensure all patients/residents have been offered influenza vaccination
- Increase efforts to ensure maximum influenza vaccination coverage among all staff
- Use appropriate PPE when in contact with individuals with respiratory symptoms
- **For Hospitals/Long-Term Care/Retirement Home Settings:**
 - Remain alert for symptoms of respiratory illness, implement appropriate precautions, and collect diagnostic specimens for influenza when appropriate. **Note the patient setting as institution if from a retirement home or other institutional setting on requisitions for specimens sent to the Public Health Lab.**
 - Ensure process is in place to obtain antivirals if needed
 - Review outbreak recognition and management guidelines; ensure outbreak kits and nasopharyngeal swab kits are readily available
 - Contact the Health Unit immediately if you suspect an outbreak

If you have any questions about this notice, please contact the Health Unit at 1-866-888-4577 ext 1232 to speak to a nurse in the Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Department.

NOTE: For easier access to the above web links, visit the Health Unit website (www.hkpr.on.ca) for electronic copies of all current – and previous – editions of *FAX Facts*. Go to the ‘Resources & Forms’ header at the top of the web page, and use the drop-down menu to click on the ‘Health Care Professionals’ section (a link to FAX Facts is posted there). A direct link is also provided below: www.hkpr.on.ca/ResourcesForms/HealthCareProfessionals/FAXFacts.aspx

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After Hours
1-888-255-7839