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Pandemic H1N1 Flu Update

Current WHO pandemic alert level: Phase 6 (Pandemic).

Current CDC pandemic severity index (PSI): Category 2 (of 5)

(see <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/community/commitigation.html> for definitions of PSI)

- **Orange County (OC) update:** As of July 9, 2009, 426 confirmed or probable cases of novel H1N1 flu have been reported in Orange County residents. There have been five deaths. **Almost all of the currently circulating influenza in Orange County since late May has been novel H1N1.** *Note: Surveillance is not population-based and underestimates the true number of cases. Certain groups may be over-represented given current priorities for testing, which includes patients with influenza-like illness who are hospitalized, health care workers, pregnant, part of a cluster/outbreak, or residing in an institutional setting.*
- **Summary of OC cases:** Median age of all cases is 16 years (range, <1 year to 69 years). 72 cases have been hospitalized with 29 in intensive care. Median age of hospitalized cases is 15 years (range, <1 year – 69 years). Median length of hospital stay is 4 days (range, 1-22 days) for the 47 discharged patients. For the 25 patients still hospitalized, length of stay to date ranges from 3 to 42 days.
- **Severe illnesses among pregnant women and infants have been a feature of the current H1N1 pandemic.** CDC has issued interim recommendations for obstetric settings to focus on prevention of novel H1N1 infection in these high risk groups. In Orange County as of 7/9/09, 16 of the novel H1N1 cases have been in pregnant women, of whom nine were hospitalized. Six of the pregnant women were in the intensive care unit; four were intubated, of whom three remain intubated and one died. See the attached “Novel Influenza H1N1 (swine flu) and Pregnant Women” which will be distributed to obstetricians through hospitals and to labor & delivery units, and will be posted at <http://www.ochealthinfo.com/epi/swine/providers/index.htm>.
- **Oseltamivir (Tamiflu ®)-resistant novel H1N1 strains found in Denmark, Japan, and Hong Kong.** All three strains had the same mutation resulting in resistance although the patient in Hong Kong (who had just arrived from San Francisco) had not previously taken the antiviral. All three patients had uncomplicated illnesses and have recovered. The WHO has not seen evidence so far of other infections with the strains even in testing close contacts and there has been no evidence of reassortment with seasonal influenza strains. Recommendations for antiviral use have not changed (see www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/recommendations.htm) and focus on treatment of persons with suspected novel H1N1 influenza who are 1) hospitalized or 2) at higher risk of complications due to influenza, even if hospitalization is not required. Use of antiviral agents for prophylaxis can be considered for persons at higher risk for complications due to influenza, and for healthcare workers (HCW) with an exposure to suspect influenza due to inadequate use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Healthcare facilities should develop administrative controls to appropriately identify potentially infectious patients promptly and utilize appropriate infection control precautions and PPE to reduce the need for post-exposure prophylaxis among HCW.
- **CDC issues pandemic vaccine guidance to assist state and local health officials in planning.** Target groups include schoolchildren and staff, children in daycare and staff, pregnant women and contacts of newborns, those with medical underlying conditions, and health workers. See <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/statelocal/planning.htm>. A CDC Update for Clinicians on H1N1 vaccine will be available by conference call on Wednesday, July 15th, 12 noon-1 pm Pacific time. Call-in number: 888-283-2960, Passcode: 2822773. See <http://emergency.cdc.gov/coca/callinfo.asp> for more information. CME is available.
- **Flu activity in Southern hemisphere varies by country.** Heavy activity has been reported from Australia and South America, but activity is just starting in Africa. In Australia both pandemic and seasonal H3N2 strains are circulating, while in South America, seasonal H1N1 is predominant. See <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/swineflu/news/jul0709influenza.html>.
- **WHO provides official name to novel H1N1 virus:** Pandemic A (H1N1) 2009.
- **HHS to fund \$350 million for state preparedness.** \$260 million will go to state health departments for general and vaccine efforts and \$90 million will go to hospitals for surge capacity.

If you have any comments about this flyer, contact Michele Cheung, MD MPH, at (714) 834-8180.

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