



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

11:00am - April 27, 2009

Medical Officer of Health reports no local swine flu cases

Health Unit and Hospital continue to take precautionary action on new H1N1 Flu Strain

Peterborough, ON – “To date, we have no cases of the new H1N1 flu under investigation in Peterborough,” confirmed Dr Pellizzari. “The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care has requested that we notify them immediately if the situation changes and we will work with our health care community to ensure that anyone with suspected human swine influenza receives the proper testing and treatment.”

As of Sunday, April 26, there were six (6) confirmed cases of human swine influenza (H1N1) in Canada, reported Dr. Rosana Pellizzari. All cases had relatively moderate disease and all are recovering. More Canadian cases are expected, she added.

Local Hospital Augments FRI Screening

“Peterborough Regional Health Centre (PRHC) is continuing to monitor for patients presenting with febrile respiratory illness (FRI) in its emergency department, as well as in all other out patient and in patient areas,” says Margaret Jay, PRHC’s Infection Control coordinator. “This screening includes obtaining a patient’s travel history.”

To date the hospital has not seen any suspected cases of the Swine Flu, reported Jay.

As per its usual practice, additional precautions, including isolation, will be maintained for all patients with FRI or suspected influenza like illnesses.

Enhanced Community-Wide Surveillance in Place

In Peterborough, enhanced surveillance has been implemented since early last week. Dr. Pellizzari stated that the PCCHU has asked that all health care providers screen patients for the presence of acute influenza-like illness. Any ill patients with a travel history to Mexico or other affected area within the last seven (7) days should be reported to the health unit for investigation.

“Currently, 19 of 30 states in Mexico are reporting influenza-like illness,” stated Dr. Pellizzari. Other affected areas include five (5) states in the U.S., Nova Scotia and BC.

The PCCHU and PRHC are working closely with other health care partners and emergency responders to ensure that the community is keeping informed and on alert for required actions locally. Information is being posted on the health unit’s website, at

www.pcchu.ca and the Public Health Agency of Canada has opened a Public Information Line at 1-800-454-8302 which is operational from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm EST.

As of April 26th, all health care setting should have signage and screening in place. Health care providers are being reminded to use appropriate precautions. The human swine influenza appears to be transmitted by respiratory droplets and can be treated with antivirals.

Travel Reminders

Canadians traveling to Mexico and other affected areas are being reminded to get a flu shot, and take precautions such as frequent hand washing. Vaccine can be provided through Family Physician or through the health unit, by calling 705-743-1000 ext 301.

Residents of Peterborough who develop new or worsening respiratory illness following either travel to Mexico or other affected areas or contact with a sick person who has traveled to Mexico or another affected area should stay home and contact their Family Physician office by telephone, or call Telehealth Ontario.

Prevention: Everyone's Responsibility

"Everyone can help prevent the spread of influenza," says PRHC's Margaret Jay. She reminds the public to get an annual flu shot; wash hands frequently; cover up when coughing or sneezing; keep shared surface areas clean; and to stay home away from public areas if illness does occur to minimize spread.

"Patients coming in for tests or procedures at PRHC are asked to please report any illness to the receptionist or nurse," adds Jay. Finally, as always, PRHC asks that visitors do not visit if they are ill.

Keeping Informed, Locally

Peterborough County-City Health Unit and/or Peterborough Regional Health Centre will continue to provide local media updates on the Swine Flu in the days and weeks ahead as the situation changes or new information becomes available.

-30-

For interviews, please contact:

Dr Rosana Pellizzari, Medical Officer of Health
Peterborough County-City Health Unit
Phone: (705) 743-1000
rpellizzari@pcchu.ca

Margaret Jay, Infection Control Coordinator
Peterborough Regional Health Centre
Phone: 705-743-2121
mjay@prhc.on.ca

For all other inquires:

Jonathan Bennett, Communications Lead
Peterborough Regional Health Centre
(direct) 705-876-5151
(cell) 705-761-5916
jbennett@prhc.on.ca