

**Middlesex County Public Health
Department**

**Novel Influenza H1N1
Partnership**

**Public Health and
Schools**

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**Responsibilities regarding Novel
H1N1**

- Surveillance
- Education/Risk Communication
- Guidance
- Vaccination
- Communication



Current Surveillance

- Receive and analyze daily reports from ERs and weekly reports from some schools
- Physician reporting system
- Investigate clusters and cases



New School Surveillance

- School absenteeism is one of the crucial surveillance tools we can use to track the spread of novel H1N1 influenza.
- It is through this surveillance that we are able to quickly initiate public health measures and understand the burden of the disease.



New Surveillance: Absentee Reporting

- Daily/Weekly email to school
- 3 question form imbedded in email
 - # students absent
 - # absent with ILI
 - # sent home with ILI
- Reply
 - (Encourage parents to leave information when calling in absent children)



SAMPLE

Fill out the form included in this message and send it back to me.

Add daily report Table Form	
<p>Type only in the areas designated for data entry. Your reply will be automatically processed. Therefore, it is important that the form or the message is not altered in any other way.</p>	
Number Absent:	<input type="text"/>
	Type a numeric value.
Influenza like illness:	<input type="text"/>
	Type a numeric value.
Number sent home with ILI	<input type="text"/>
	Type a numeric value.

Education/Risk Communication

- ❑ Provide fact sheets, guidance documents, presentations, lesson plans, interactive educational materials.
- ❑ Schools can help serve as a focus for educational activities aimed at promoting ways to reduce the spread of influenza, including hand hygiene, cough etiquette, and staying home when sick.



Guidance

- ❑ Notify schools of novel H1N1 updates
- ❑ Send guidance to schools from CDC or New Jersey Dept of Health and Senior Services (NJDHSS)
- ❑ Define classification of terms, i.e. clusters, Influenza-like Illness (ILI), confirmed cases



Influenza Like Illness Definition

- ILI is defined as fever (temperature $>37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ [100°F]) AND cough AND/OR sore throat in the absence of another known cause.



Communication

- Public health should communicate regularly with school officials to give guidance, offer assistance, provide updates on H1N1.
- School administrator's should communicate regularly with local public health officials to report school situations regarding illness, and discuss possible actions.



Recommendations for K-12 Schools

- ❑ School dismissal is not advised for a suspected or confirmed case of novel influenza A (H1N1) and, in general, is not advised unless there is a magnitude of faculty or student absenteeism that interferes with the school's ability to function
- ❑ Keep updated on increasing absences (not including vacations, etc)
- ❑ Recommendations change if novel H1N1 becomes more severe.
- ❑ **Closing schools is a school district decision.**



Exclusion from school

- ❑ Students, faculty or staff with influenza-like illness (fever with a cough or sore throat) should stay home and not attend school for *24 hours after resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.*



Reporting

- Keeping in close contact with the health department regarding possible clusters, cases, etc.
- Report daily absenteeism via email based reporting form that includes # absent, ILI illness, and other comments.



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