

1) H1N1 Update

- a. H1N1 remains a mild influenza which will probably spread with greater speed and virulence in time
- b. Public health agencies are no longer monitoring the # of cases due to the widespread nature of H1N1
- c. H1N1 will return for a second phase in the fall
- d. The virus is spread through droplets contained in sneezes and coughs, and by hand contact.
- e. Federal gov. has ordered one vaccine for every Canadian but will not be available until Nov.
- f. Board has developed a Pandemic Plan in consultation with WDG Public Health (and Upper Grand)

2) Board Plan

- a. Focuses on prevention, mitigation, and response
 - i. Regular hand hygiene (soap and warm water);
 1. Before eating
 2. After washroom breaks
 3. After sneezing, coughing, blowing nose
 4. When hands are visibly dirty

Teachers/staff are asked to set a good example and to assist in the teaching of good hand washing techniques.

- ii. incorporate regular hand washing breaks into the school day; signage to be posted.
- iii. Proper respiratory etiquette; coughing into tissue or elbow
- iv. Use of alcohol-based hand rub in classrooms; to be placed in schools by Board for Sept. only where use will be supervised; bottles to be kept on teacher desk (memorandum to be issued)
 1. 60-70% ethyl alcohol, hypoallergenic, fragrance/dye perfume free, with moisturizers
- v. Awareness of signs and symptoms of influenza-like illness

- vi. Isolation and promptly sending home of students with symptoms of influenza-like illness

Direction from Medical Officer of Health:

“A child presenting with respiratory or flu like symptoms is to remain at home for 7 days from the onset of symptoms.”

- vii. Reinforcement of “stay at home while ill” policies directed at staff and parents with children in school; encouraging of parents to call in about illness and report on symptoms
- viii. Monitoring and reporting of school absenteeism (in excess of 10%) by principal to WDGPH

b. Mitigation/Response

- i. If a child presents at school with flu-like symptoms upon arrival or during the day:
 1. Remove child from classroom promptly; arrangements to be made for child to go home
 2. Isolate/place child in pre-designated area
 3. Limit number of staff interacting with student(s)
 4. Follow proper hand hygiene practices
- ii. Cleaning protocols have been established and custodial staff trained
- iii. Plans to be developed for high risk students/staff (medically fragile); E.A.’s performing tasks where risk of transmission is high: i.e. pregnant staff

c. School Closure

- i. Medical Officer of Health alone has authority to close a school due to health reasons
Ministry of Health has indicated that it is likely that most schools will remain open during an outbreak.
- ii. Director can close a school if unable to operate for safety reasons (e.g. high rate of staff absenteeism, not enough supply teachers)

3) Key Messages

- We have a plan
- Stay home if sick
- Clean hands often
- Proper respiratory etiquette
- Update vaccinations
- Cleaning of frequently touched surfaces
- Parents need a back up plan.