Managing an Influenza Outbreak

What is an influenza outbreak?

ONE resident with a <u>confirmed</u> case of influenza is considered an outbreak. If you have TWO residents who have influenza-like symptoms (acute febrile respiratory illness) within 72 hours of one another, you also have an outbreak.

What to do in the event of an outbreak:

Per WAC 246-101-305, every facility is required to report all suspected and confirmed outbreaks to their local health jurisdiction - Cowlitz County Health Department. Per DSHS Purple Book, the facility is required to report the outbreak to DSHS complaint hotline at 800-562-6078 and facilities must also record outbreak information in the facility reporting log.

   *Start a line list for all ill residents and staff, a line list template can be found here: http://www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/index.aspx?nid=2270. Fax completed line lists to the Cowlitz County Health Department, fax the list again when/if changes are made.

Other helpful tips for outbreaks:

   *Consider cancelling large group activities to limit potential exposures.

   *Serve meals in resident rooms.

   *Limit visitors during an outbreak, a "No Visitor" sign can be found here: http://www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/index.aspx?nid=2270

   *There is no requirement to suspend admissions, however, some facilities opt to do this on their own.

   *The outbreak is considered over when it has been 7 days since the last onset of symptoms. If anyone new becomes symptomatic within the 7 days, the 7 days starts over.

**Current influenza season data updates for Cowlitz county can be found here:
http://www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/index.aspx?nid=2334**

The Cowlitz County Health Department Communicable Disease Team is always happy to assist and answer any questions that arise. To reach via phone, please call 360-414-5599, extension 6431. Faxes can be sent to 360-425-7531.

Cowlitz County has seen an increased number of communicable respiratory illnesses so far this winter, including non-influenza illness such as pertussis. Please be sure to refer residents/staff with acute respiratory/cough illness to a healthcare provider for proper evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment.

We all know that winter in the Pacific Northwest is unpredictable! Take the guessing game out of this season; be prepared ahead of time!

Whether it is deciding to shelter in place, minimize staff due to travel restrictions, or other modifications, safety is key.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has a page dedicated to Winter Weather Health, Preparedness and Safety. Check it out!

https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/index.html

https://www.ready.gov/winter-weather is also a great resource for being prepared for whatever mother nature throws us this winter!

If you have any questions, concerns, or are interested in more information, please reach out to your Cowlitz County Local Emergency Response Coordinator at 360-414-5599 ext 6450, or email at eagona@co.cowlitz.wa.us.

Provider Resources Website

We are excited to announce the launching of our new Provider Resources Website! This one-stop shop offers expert information you need on testing, treatment, infection control, and hot topics in public health – it's all there in one place, right at your fingertips.

Check it out! http://cchhsproviderresources.org

You'll find: Reporting forms, Notifiable conditions, disease surveillance, advisories and alerts, and much, much more!

It's user-friendly design, intuitive buttons and robust search functionality get you what you need, quickly and easily.

Mobile friendly design means you can get what you need, wherever you are.

Build-in accessibility tools – like the translate feature – help eliminate barriers to important health information.

There is even a video tutorial on the home page (just scroll down on the site to see the website tutorial). It demonstrates the site's features and shows you how to get around.

Communicable Disease General Information & Reporting Line: 360-414-5599 x 6431

After Hours Reporting: 360-636-9595