

June 24, 2009

4:00 PM

Significant developments today:

- Florida has two confirmed deaths related to H1N1 Swine Flu
- Florida currently has 556 confirmed cases of H1N1 Swine Flu

CURRENT SITUATION

A second laboratory-confirmed H1N1 Swine Flu death has been confirmed in that of a 30-year-old female in Seminole County. Florida's first confirmed death in mid-June was a 9-year-old Miami-Dade County resident. While most cases of H1N1 Swine Flu are mild, there are exceptions. Pre-existing health condition often play a role in how individuals react to the flu.

"Our hearts and prayers go out to the family and friends of these individuals." said Surgeon General Dr. Ana Viamonte Ros. "All of us should continue to be alert and stay home if sick, cover your cough and sneeze, and wash hands frequently."

All four Department of Health laboratories have received testing supplies from the Center for Diseases Control and can test samples to confirm H1N1 Swine Flu. This testing capability allows the Department to expedite results as the Department no longer needs to send probable cases to CDC laboratories.

The Department of Health continues enhanced surveillance and outreach to physicians, hospitals and other health care professionals. The surveillance system, consisting of sentinel physicians, reporting influenza activity, DOH laboratories receiving specimens from physicians and hospitals and the Department's ability to monitor emergency room cases and over-the-counter drug sales is fully operational. The Department has activated its response plan and is ready to respond if needed.

The Department of Health continues its enhanced surveillance with a network of sentinel physician providers. These providers send selected samples of laboratory specimens to state laboratories for testing if they have patients with influenza-like illness (ILI). These physicians also continue to report weekly ILI cases to the Department of Health.

Florida currently has 556 confirmed cases of H1N1 Swine Flu.

The World Health Organization (WHO) alert level is at Phase 6 "pandemic." The pandemic (WHO level 6) status is based on geographic distribution and not the severity

of swine flu. In effect the WHO is saying that swine flu H1N1 is now circulating world-wide.

PRECAUTIONS

The State Surgeon General provides these recommendations:

People with respiratory illness should stay home from work or school to avoid spreading infections, including influenza, to others in the community.

- § Avoid close contact with people who are coughing or otherwise appear ill.
- § Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- § Wash hands frequently to lessen the spread of respiratory illness.

People experiencing cough, fever and fatigue, possibly along with diarrhea and vomiting, should contact their physician.

If you think you have influenza, please call your health care provider and discuss whether you need to be seen in their office, emergency department or stay home.