

Influenza A H1N1 - Keeping you Informed

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As you are probably aware the World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared the spread of Influenza A H1N1 as a pandemic. A pandemic must be taken seriously because of its capacity to spread rapidly. The WHO have also advised that it does not mean an increase in the severity of this influenza. In fact the symptoms are reportedly mild.

The Ministry of Health (MOH) alert code has moved to code red. This means that they are still focusing on border control and isolation of confirmed or suspected cases to reduce the number of people contracting H1N1 at any one time. However they are aware that some people have contracted the flu without any known contacts with overseas travelers.

Mclsaac Caregiving Agency has activated its pandemic preparedness plans, which will help to safeguard the wellbeing of our workforce and clients while ensuring that our essential services continue.

If you hear anything that may affect our staff or service delivery, please speak with your Area Supervisor. If you are concerned that you may have Influenza A H1N1 or have come in contact in the last 7 days with someone who may have it please call the MOH Healthline 0800 611 116 or your GP.

How do I know if I have influenza?

Symptoms	Influenza	Cold
Fever/Chills	Common	Uncommon
Aches and Pains	Common and severe; prominent headache	Mild, headaches rare
Cough	Common	Less common, mild/moderate
Tiredness	Common and severe	Mild
Sudden Onset	Sudden	Gradual

How is influenza A H1N1 passed on?

It is passed on by sneezing, coughing or when people pick the virus up from their hands.

Best practice indicates the following – our staff will assist you wherever possible to follow these simple steps:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water particularly after you cough or sneeze.
- Avoid contact with sick people where possible.
- You should minimize your contact with other people initially to avoid spreading the virus.
- You should cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze then dispose of the tissue immediately into a rubbish bin.

If you do contract Influenza A H1N1 your care will carry on as usual, but with the added precaution of masks and gloves when our staff are working in close contact with you. Your Area Supervisor will provide these to your team when required.

For Additional Information please refer to these websites:

Ministry of Health: www.moh.govt.nz

World Health Organisation: www.who.int/en