

DHHS Reports First H1N1-Related Death in New Hampshire

Division of Public Health Services

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Concord, NH – The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) reports the first death related to the H1N1 virus in the State. The 22-year-old woman, a resident of Hillsborough County, had other health issues that may have contributed to her untimely death.

“It is with great sadness that we have learned today of a resident of New Hampshire who has died after becoming ill with the H1N1 virus,” said Nicholas Toumpas, Commissioner of DHHS. “We extend our deepest sympathy to this woman’s family and friends. Our thoughts are with them during this difficult time.”

Since first being recognized in April 2009, the novel influenza A virus (H1N1) has spread to 168 countries. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak a pandemic in June. As of August 13, H1N1 infection has resulted in 7,511 hospitalizations and 477 deaths in the United States.

“This sad news unfortunately highlights the fact that H1N1 never went away and that we still need to take precautions to prevent becoming ill and passing this virus, and other illnesses, to other people,” said Dr. Jose Montero, Director of Public Health at DHHS. “While most people sick with H1N1 in New Hampshire and the nation have had a relatively mild infection, this news demonstrates how serious influenza can be, especially in those with underlying medical conditions, pregnant women and young people.”

The federal government is working on developing a vaccine against H1N1. The first groups that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have identified to receive this vaccine include: people 6 months to 24 years of age, healthcare and EMS workers, pregnant women, household contacts of children younger than 6 months, and people 25- 64 years of age with underlying health conditions that put them at greater risk of complications. All New Hampshire residents are reminded to continue to take everyday actions to prevent H1N1 and to stay healthy, including:

- Cover your nose and mouth with your sleeve when you cough or sneeze. If you use a tissue throw the tissue in the trash after use and wash your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Stay home from work and school if you become sick.
- Stay informed.

For more information on H1N1, visit the DHHS website at www.dhhs.nh.gov or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at www.flu.gov.