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First Confirmed Case of Influenza 2014-2015

NH Division of Public Health Services (NH DPHS) recommends the following:

1. Awareness of the first confirmed influenza virus infection in New Hampshire for the 2014-2015 influenza season.
2. Awareness of the availability and composition of the 2014-2015 seasonal influenza vaccine.
3. Encourage influenza vaccination for everyone over six months of age (without medical contraindication).

Epidemiology:

NH DPHS has confirmed the first respiratory sample positive for seasonal influenza virus (influenza AH3) in the New Hampshire Public Health Laboratories (NH PHL) for this 2014-2015 season. The case was confirmed in an adult with influenza-like illness (ILI) in Grafton County. Nationwide, there is very little circulating influenza at this point.

The previous 2013-2014 influenza season was characterized overall by lower levels of outpatient illness and mortality than the previous season, but nationally there were higher levels of hospitalization among adults aged 50-64 years compared with recent years. In New Hampshire, there were a total of 14 influenza-associated deaths for the 2013-2014 season which is within the historical range seen during flu seasons since 1997. New Hampshire did not report any pediatric influenza-associated deaths last season.

Vaccination:

Both trivalent and quadrivalent influenza vaccine preparations are available in the United States for 2014-2015; the live attenuated influenza vaccine (nasal spray) is quadrivalent. The 2014-2015 influenza vaccine will contain the same virus strains as the 2013-2014 vaccine. The trivalent vaccine is made from the following three viruses: A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)-like virus; A/Texas/50/2012 (H3N2)-like virus and B/Massachusetts/2/2012-like virus. The Quadrivalent vaccine will contain antigens from these virus strains in addition to the B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus.

All persons aged ≥ 6 months should be vaccinated annually, especially those who are at increased risk for severe complications from influenza. Continued emphasis should be placed on vaccination of persons who live with or care for persons at higher risk for influenza-related complications. Persons with a history of influenza or vaccination last year should be encouraged to get the vaccine again this year, due to the natural waning of the antibody response. It is not too early to begin vaccinating patients now, since it takes about 14 days for antibodies to form and the flu season has already begun in our state.

Children aged 6 months to 8 years old who are undergoing their first season of vaccination should receive 2 doses of influenza vaccine. If children in this age group already received a

dose of the 2013-2014 seasonal influenza vaccine, then only one dose of the 2014-2015 seasonal influenza vaccine is required since they contain the same strains. Other children aged 6 months to 8 years old may require 2 doses of influenza vaccine depending on when their last influenza vaccine was administered. Further guidance on which children should receive 2 doses is available at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6332a3.htm#fig1>.

All children who are recommended for 2 doses should receive their first dose as soon as possible after the vaccine becomes available to allow time for a second dose prior to increase in influenza activity. The second dose should be given ≥ 4 weeks later. When available, Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine (LAIV) should be used for healthy children aged 2 through 8 years, who have no contraindications or precautions (Category A), due to recent studies which suggest better efficacy of the LAIV over the inactivated influenza vaccine (IIV) shot in children. If LAIV is not immediately available, IIV should be used; vaccination should not be delayed to procure LAIV.

Guidance on the use of LAIV and IIV is available at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6332a3.htm> -
[Considerations Use Live Attenuated](#)

Guidance for vaccinating persons with reported egg allergies is available at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6332a3.htm#fig2>

NH DPHS will continue to update you throughout this influenza season when we have new data to share about circulating strains of influenza in New Hampshire, antiviral susceptibilities, or increased rates of illness. Please contact us directly with any questions about influenza or if we can help with your response during this current season.

- ▶ For additional information on the 2014-2015 Influenza Season from CDC refer to their website at: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/season/flu-season-2014-2015.htm>
- ▶ For additional information on influenza diagnostic testing, please refer to the NH DHHS website for archived HAN messages at <http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/alerts/han.htm>
- ▶ For any questions regarding the contents of this message, please contact NH DHHS, DPHS, Bureau of Infectious Disease Control at 603-271-4496 (after hours 1-800-852-3345 ext.5300).
- ▶ To change your contact information in the NH Health Alert Network, contact Denise Krol at 603-271-4596 or email Denise.Krol@dhhs.state.nh.us

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Attachments: None

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