**Swine flu**

**Key Points for Schools**

**Issued:** 29 April 2009

What is swine influenza (swine ‘flu)?

Swine influenza (swine flu) is a respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza. Swine flu viruses do not normally infect humans, however, human infections with swine flu have occurred in the past, and cases of human-to-human spread of a swine flu virus have been recently confirmed.

What is the current situation?

Human cases of a new form of influenza virus have been identified in the United States, Mexico, Canada and a number of other countries (a list of affected countries can be found at the WHO website – see links below).

The World Health Organization has declared the swine influenza situation to be a public health event of international significance.

No cases of swine influenza have been confirmed in New South Wales or Australia.

NSW Health is working closely with other State and Commonwealth Government agencies to investigate and respond to this situation.

Who is at risk?

If you are returning from recent travel (in the last 7 days) in the United States, Canada, Mexico or other affected countries (see website for latest list) you may be at risk.

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of swine influenza are similar to seasonal influenza (fever, cough, tiredness, muscle aches, sore throat, chills, shortness of breath, runny nose, headache). Some cases of swine influenza have also complained of vomiting and diarrhoea. Symptoms of influenza generally appear between two to four days after exposure.

Controlling Spread of Infection

If you develop influenza like symptoms whilst in, or within 7 days of returning from, an affected country please attend your nearest hospital emergency department and tell them that you have recently returned from overseas and may have flu. Further public health advice can be obtained from your local Public Health Unit (see below for contact details).

If you are sick with an influenza like illness, you should stay at home and limit contact to other people to avoid infecting them. You need to take appropriate precautions: cover mouth when coughing or sneezing and wash hands regularly, including after contact with soiled tissues or contact with nose or throat discharge.

Responsibility of Child care providers and Parents

If a student has recently travelled (in the last 7 days) to the United States, Canada or Mexico, or other affected countries and develops influenza-like symptoms, the Principal should contact the parents immediately. The Principal should advise the child’s parents to attend their local emergency department and tell them that they have recently returned from overseas and may have flu. Further public health advice can be obtained from the local Public Health Unit (see below for contact details).

The school principal should contact the local Public Health Unit immediately to notify the case.
For more information
Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing swine influenza information hotline 1802007

Related links
NSW Health swine flu website

NSW Health influenza factsheet (usual human influenza)

Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing

World Health Organization
http://www.who.int/

Travel Advice (Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade)
http://www.smartraveller.gov.au

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu

Further information – Public Health Units in NSW
For more information please contact your doctor, local public health unit or community health centre
– look under NSW Government at the front of the White Pages.

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<td>Hornsby 02 9477 9400 Greater Southern Goulburn 02 4824 1837</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gosford 02 4349 4845 Albury 02 6080 8900</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Eastern Sydney / Illawarra</td>
<td>Randwick 02 9382 8333 Greater Western Broken Hill 08 8080 1499</td>
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<td>Wollongong 02 4221 6700 Dubbo 02 6841 5569</td>
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<td>Sydney South West</td>
<td>Camperdown 02 9515 9420 Bathurst 02 6388 5601</td>
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<td>South Western Sydney</td>
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<td>Paramatta 02 9840 3603 North Coast Port Macquarie 02 6586 2750</td>
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<tr>
<td>District Health Service</td>
<td>Marrickville 02 9311 2707 Lismore 02 6620 7500</td>
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NSW Department of Health Nth Sydney 02 9391 9000
NSW Health website www.health.nsw.gov.au