

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (36) in DH SEB CD 8/91/9

29 June 2009

Dear Managers / Infection Control Officer of Residential Care Homes,

**Prevention and Management of Human Swine Influenza A(H1N1)  
in Residential Care Homes for the Elderly**

Latest surveillance data shows that human Swine Influenza (HSI) is now widely circulating in our community. HSI in Hong Kong is so far manifesting itself in a relatively mild manner resembling seasonal flu, like in most other countries.

However, according to overseas experience, serious or fatal cases do occur especially among the at-risk population groups especially persons with chronic illnesses and the elderly. Institutionalized elderly people are therefore considered to be at risk of complications from HSI, which has already caused a number of outbreaks in the local community.

To prevent outbreaks in the elderly homes, it is of paramount importance to minimize the chance of introduction of HSI into the elderly home via staff and visitors from the community. In this regard,

- Visitors with acute respiratory symptoms or fever should NOT be allowed to enter the elderly home.
- All visitors should wear face masks before they enter the elderly home.
- Visitors should wash their hands with soap and water or apply alcohol handrub before they enter the elderly home.
- Staff of the elderly home should check their temperature daily before starting work. Staff with acute respiratory illness or fever should not be allowed to work in the elderly home.
- If residents and staff develop symptoms of respiratory tract infection, they should wear mask and seek medical advice promptly.
- If staff's family contact has respiratory symptoms, the staff should



monitor his/her own health condition closely and seek medical advice promptly if develop symptoms. He/she should wear face mask while in the elderly home and minimize direct contact with residents as far as practicable.

In addition, the management of institutions is advised to observe the following health measures:

- To maintain good indoor ventilation
- To enhance environment cleansing and disinfect with 1 in 99 diluted household bleach (mixing one part of 5.25% hypochlorite solution with 99 parts of water) or use 70% alcohol for metallic surface.
- To remind all residents and staff of the following measures:
  - Keep hands clean and wash hands properly. Alcohol-based hand rub is also effective when hands are not visibly soiled.
  - Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth.
  - Wash hands with liquid soap promptly if they are contaminated by respiratory tract secretions, e.g. after sneezing or coughing.
  - Cover nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing.
  - No spitting. Always wrap nasal and mouth discharges with tissue paper, and dispose of the tissue paper properly in a lidded rubbish bin.

If any residents or staff of your institutions are **confirmed positive for Human Swine Influenza A/H1N1**, or if you notice an increase in respiratory illnesses in your institutions, please report to the Central Notification Office (CENO) of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) by fax (2477-2770) or by phone (2477-2772).

Currently, the Hospital Authority is operating 8 Designated Flu Clinics (DFC) for diagnosis and treatment of patients with symptoms of influenza-like-illness. Patients with severe illness would be admitted to hospitals for further management. Further information of DFC is available at Hospital Authority's website: [http://www.ha.org.hk/visitor/ha\\_visitor\\_index.asp?Parent\\_ID=311&Content\\_ID=138537&Dimension=100&Lang=ENG](http://www.ha.org.hk/visitor/ha_visitor_index.asp?Parent_ID=311&Content_ID=138537&Dimension=100&Lang=ENG)

For the latest information and health education material on human swine influenza, please see our CHP website at [www.chp.gov.hk](http://www.chp.gov.hk). Thank you very much for your assistance.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr SK CHUANG)

Consultant Community Medicine (Communicable Disease)  
Centre for Health Protection  
Department of Health



衛生防護中心乃衛生署  
轄下執行疾病預防  
及控制的專業架構  
*The Centre for Health  
Protection is a  
professional arm of the  
Department of Health for  
disease prevention and  
control*