

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (14) in DH SEB CD/8/27/1 Pt.19

18 March 2010

Dear Managers / Infection Control Officer of Residential Care Home,

**Arrival of the Peak Season for Influenza and Increase in RSV Activity in  
Hong Kong**

Most recent surveillance data showed an increasing number of influenza detections made by our laboratory and an increasing number of institutional influenza-like illness (ILI) outbreaks, signaling the arrival of the traditional peak season for seasonal influenza. The number of ILI outbreaks in institutions has increased from 24 in the week ending March 13 to 31 in the past five days (March 14 – 18). The main circulating influenza viruses consist mainly of human swine influenza and influenza B.

At the same time, our surveillance also showed high seasonal activity of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). RSV is a common cause of respiratory tract infection. It usually affects elderly people and young children at the age of five or below. In this regard, I would like to urge you to keep vigilance and implement prompt preventive measures against influenza and other respiratory infections at your institution/organization.

Young children, elderly people and patients with chronic diseases are more prone to influenza infection and its complications. As institutions and organizations are collective assembly places, infectious diseases like influenza could be easily spread among people through their daily contact. Sources of infection could come from staff, visitors or clients (especially those just discharged from hospitals). Children with acute febrile illness should not attend institution / organization till 48 hours after fever has subsided.

To prevent outbreaks, people with fever and respiratory symptoms are strongly advised to avoid attending institutions and affected clients should be promptly isolated. The following health measures are important:

- To maintain good personal hygiene, and wash hands after sneezing,



coughing;

- To maintain good ventilation;
- To build up good body immunity by having a proper diet, regular exercise and adequate rest, reducing stress and avoiding smoking;
- To avoid visiting crowded places with poor ventilation, especially during influenza season; and
- To wear face masks and consult doctor promptly if influenza-like symptoms develop.

You are reminded to monitor the sick pattern or absenteeism among your staff or clients, and report promptly to our Central Notification Office (Tel: 2477-2772; Fax: 2477-2770) if there is a suspected outbreak of respiratory infection in your institution/organization. Staff with respiratory illnesses who are suspected to be epidemiologically linked to an outbreak should refrain from work.

For the latest information on influenza activity, please see our Swine and Seasonal Flu Monitor at the CHP website ([www.chp.gov.hk](http://www.chp.gov.hk)).

Yours faithfully,



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