

DPHHS HAN ADVISORY



Cover Sheet

DATE: January 8, 2013

SUBJECT: INFLUENZA UPDATE AND REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS AND PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCIES

For LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT reference only

DPHHS Subject Matter Resource for more information regarding this HAN, contact:

CDCP Epidemiology Section

444-0273

INSTRUCTIONS: Please read and report your jurisdictions confirmed and suspected cases of influenza to the Communicable Disease Epidemiology Section on the Confirmed and Suspected Reporting Form.

**DPHHS Health Alert Hotline:
1-800-701-5769**

**DPHHS HAN Website:
www.han.mt.gov**

DISTRIBUTE to your HAN Contacts. Share this information with relevant SMEs or contacts (internal and external). **Remove this cover sheet before redistributing and replace it with your own.**

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Please ensure that DPHHS is included on your HAN distribution list.

Categories of Health Alert Messages:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

Please call DPHHS to update contact information at 444-0919 or 444-6906

Information Sheet

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Information: Influenza cases continue to increase in Montana. **As of today, we are reporting “widespread” activity- indicting the presence of laboratory confirmed influenza and/or outbreaks throughout the state.** We anticipate continued interest by the media at both a state level and a local level and need your assistance with timely and accurate reporting. We need your help to keep our data up to date.

We are also reminding the press and public to remember to:

- 1) Get vaccinated. It is still the best prevention and this year’s vaccine matches most of the circulating viruses identified at this time.
- 2) Encourage ill people to stay home from work, school and other public settings.
- 3) Encourage frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizers to minimize spread of the virus.

Recommendations for Clinicians:

Influenza is reportable to your local public health agency. Please continue to report suspected and confirmed cases of influenza to your local public health contacts. Continue to offer vaccine to all staff and patients. Advise those ill to protect others by staying home whenever possible to minimize spread and consider the use of antivirals as needed. Additional guidance can be found at: www.flu.gov or www.cdc.gov.

Recommendations for Local Health Jurisdictions:

- 1) Report ONE number to DPHHS weekly indicating how many cases of influenza were reported locally. The single number reported to DPHHS will include both suspected and confirmed influenza cases. Confirmed cases are rapid positives or confirmed by culture or PCR. Suspected cases are those presenting with symptoms that your local health care providers consider consistent with influenza. DPHHS does not recommend counting all negative influenza laboratory results as suspected cases.
- 2) **We are asking all jurisdictions to submit an updated reporting form detailing reports to your offices as of January 5th, 2013.** If you have zero cases, please indicate that as appropriate. On the reporting form, please provide weekly detail of your case counts if you have not already done so.
- 3) Please continue to fax your weekly update to DPHHS no later than the following Tuesday by 5 PM. At this time, we are asking for a report regardless of cases.
- 4) Please contact your key surveillance partners per contract deliverables and reinforce the need for reporting.