

Eastern Michigan University – Emergency Management 2009 Influenza A (H1N1) Outbreak Situation Report

Situation Update #15

Date: 15 October 2009

Time: 1:00pm EDT

Evidence from multiple outbreak sites demonstrates that the H1N1 pandemic virus has rapidly established itself and is now the dominant influenza strain in most parts of the world. The pandemic will persist in the coming months as the virus continues to move through susceptible populations. Preliminary epidemiologic data on the H1N1 flu suggests significant risk among those in the college setting.

[Novel H1N1 Influenza](#) (referred to as "swine flu" early on) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. On June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) raised the worldwide pandemic alert level to Phase 6 in response to the ongoing global spread of the novel influenza A (H1N1) virus. A Phase 6 designation indicates that a global pandemic is underway.

[Pandemic Influenza](#) is flu that causes a global outbreak of serious illness that spreads easily from person to person, such as novel H1N1 influenza.

[Seasonal Influenza](#) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. Seasonal influenza outbreaks occur every year.

Modes of 2009 H1N1 Influenza Transmission

2009 H1N1 influenza virus appears to be transmitted from person to person through close contact in ways similar to other influenza viruses. Although the relative contribution of each mode is uncertain, influenza virus can potentially be transmitted through:

- Droplet exposure of mucosal surfaces (e.g., nose, mouth, and eyes) by respiratory secretions from coughing or sneezing;
- Contact, usually of hands, with an infectious patient or fomite (a surface that is contaminated with secretions) followed by self-inoculation of virus onto mucosal surfaces such as those of the nose, mouth, and eyes; and
- Small particle aerosols in the vicinity of the infectious individual.

Eastern Michigan University

<http://www.emich.edu/uhs/swineflu/>

Eastern Michigan University has initiated comprehensive H1N1 prevention and preparedness activities to minimize impacts caused by both the seasonal flu and the H1N1 virus. EMU's initiatives include providing up-to-date information to faculty, staff, students and parents; contingency planning for continuity of operations in the event of an outbreak; lessons in proper hand washing; and, offering informational meetings for students and employees.

Key Activities

- EMU distributed 2,500 bottles of hand sanitizer and informational letter during student move-in day (September 5th).
- Parents of first-year students, age 24 or younger, received a letter outlining medical services, including information about available vaccines, offered by University Health Services.
- Informational letters were distributed to the following target populations:
 - All EMU students
 - Residence hall students and university apartment tenants
 - New Student Orientation Student Assistants
 - International students
 - Greek community members
 - Faculty and Academic Affairs Administrators
 - Parents of students
 - EMU employees

Surveillance

EMU's influenza surveillance is a collaborative effort between federal, state and local health departments and other agencies. The campus surveillance effort includes:

- Finding out when and where influenza activity is occurring
 - Tracking influenza-related illness
 - Tracking what influenza viruses are circulating
 - Measuring the impact influenza is having on the EMU campus community
- As of 10/10/09, EMU has documented 6 diagnosed and 35 probable cases of Influenza-Like Illness (ILI). Influenza-Like Illness case definition = fever (> or = 100 degrees F) AND cough and/or sore throat (in the absence of a known cause other than influenza).

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- The Michigan Department of Community Health has reported 530 cases of Influenza Like Illness (ILI) in Washtenaw County from September 27 through October 10, 2009. Reports of confirmed influenza cases in Washtenaw residents started to increase again for the week ending October 9. All cases are influenza A and many have been sub-typed as H1N1. The age range of recent cases is 1 to 84 years, although the majority of cases are still in young adults. Two new hospitalizations with confirmed influenza were reported. No deaths due to the 2009 H1N1 virus have been reported in Washtenaw County residents to date.
- EMU is participating with the American College Health Association in a national surveillance network to report data on a weekly basis that is specific to campus communities. ACHA Pandemic Influenza Surveillance - Influenza Like Illness (ILI) in Colleges and Universities http://www.acha.org/ILI_Surveillance.cfm

Vaccination

The EMU Snow Health Center is currently providing seasonal flu vaccination services to the campus community. For further information, call University Health Services @734.487.1122. The Washtenaw County Public Health Department received an initial allotment of 2009 H1N1 vaccine, including nasal spray (FluMist) and flu shots this week. Initial supplies are very limited. Shipments are expected to continue weekly and should provide enough H1N1 vaccine for prioritized groups by the end of October. Public Health is working closely with health care and community partners to provide available doses to priority populations as quickly and safely as possible. EMU Health Services is awaiting its allocation of the vaccine and will provide vaccination information once the vaccine has arrived.

- CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has recommended that certain groups of the population receive the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine when it first becomes available:
 - Pregnant women because they are at higher risk of complications and can potentially provide protection to infants who cannot be vaccinated;
 - Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age because younger infants are at higher risk of influenza-related complications and cannot be vaccinated;
 - Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel because infections among healthcare workers have been reported and this can be a potential source of infection for vulnerable patients;
 - All people from 6 months through 24 years of age;
 - Children from 6 months through 18 years of age because we have seen many cases of novel H1N1 influenza in children and they are in close contact with each other in school and day care settings, which increases the likelihood of disease spread;
 - Young adults 19 through 24 years of age because we have seen many cases of novel H1N1 influenza in these healthy young adults and they often live, work, and study in close proximity, and they are a frequently mobile population; and,
 - Persons aged 25 through 64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza.

Campus Community Mitigation

Community mitigation includes such measures as social distancing (e.g., cancelling events with large crowds, school and daycare closures, etc.) and targeted use of antiviral medications. Isolation and treatment are all effective measures in preventing the spread of influenza. Isolation refers to the separation of persons who have a specific infectious illness from those who are healthy by restricting movement and interaction to stop or minimize the spread of that particular illness.

- EMU has installed hand sanitizer along with informational signage at high traffic/contact locations including the student center, computing centers, Halle Library and other locations.
- A Web site listing action steps for preventing the spread of the flu and an FAQs page providing current information and updates. The site can be accessed at <http://www.emich.edu/uhs/swineflu/>
- **CDC recommends that individuals with influenza-like illness remain at home and away from other people until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100° F [37.8° C] or greater), or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications.**

Communications

Guidance to the campus community about how to protect themselves is an essential component of influenza prevention. When health risks are uncertain, people need information about what is known and unknown, as well as interim guidance to formulate decisions to help protect their health and the health of others.

- EMU is preparing the campus community for the H1N1 influenza pandemic by developing messages and materials to promote preparedness and prevention. The university is employing public outreach efforts to the campus community through its

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website, EMU Hotline, informational letters and posters, public outreach to various groups on campus, and by sharing information with the media.

- September 3rd press release on EMU H1N1 preparations and interviews with local radio and television outlets.
- September 4th letter from Provost to faculty on H1N1 prevention & preparedness.

World Health Organization (WHO)

World Health Organization <http://www.who.int/en/> [On June 11, WHO raised the pandemic alert level from Phase 5 to Phase 6 indicating that an influenza pandemic is underway.]

As of 4 October 2009, worldwide there have been more than 375,000 laboratory confirmed cases of pandemic influenza H1N1 2009 and over 4500 deaths reported to WHO. As many countries have stopped counting individual cases, particularly of milder illness, the case count is significantly lower than the actual number of cases that have occurred. WHO is actively monitoring the progress of the pandemic through frequent consultations with the WHO Regional Offices and member states and through monitoring of multiple sources of data. Levels of ILI have continued to increase and remain above the seasonal baseline for the past 4 weeks in most regions of the United States.

Pandemia (H1N1) 2009: Interactive Map: <http://new.paho.org/hq/images/atlas/en/atlas.html>

CDC

CDC U.S. Human Swine Influenza Infection website: <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/investigation.htm>

CDC Guidance: <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/guidance/>

As of October 9, 2009, a review of the key indicators found that influenza activity remained elevated in the United States. Below is a summary of the most recent key indicators:

- Visits to doctors for influenza-like illness (ILI) continued to increase in the United States, and overall, are higher than levels expected for this time of the year.
- Total influenza hospitalization rates for laboratory-confirmed influenza are higher than expected for this time of year for adults and children. And for children 5-17 and adults 18-49 years of age, hospitalization rates from April – October 2009 exceed average flu season rates (for October through April).
- The proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza (P&I) based on the 122 Cities Report has increased and now exceeds what is normally expected at this time of year. In addition, 19 flu-related pediatric deaths were reported this week; 16 of these deaths were confirmed 2009 H1N1 and 3 were untyped influenza A and likely to be 2009 H1N1. A total of 76 laboratory confirmed 2009 H1N1 pediatric deaths have been reported to CDC since April.
- Thirty-seven states are reporting widespread influenza activity at this time. They are: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, and Wyoming. Any reports of widespread influenza activity in September and October are very unusual.
- Almost all of the influenza viruses identified so far are 2009 H1N1 influenza A viruses. These viruses remain similar to the virus chosen for the 2009 H1N1 vaccine, and remain susceptible to the antiviral drugs oseltamivir and zanamivir with rare exception.

Internet Resources

Washtenaw County H1N1 and Seasonal Influenza Information

http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/public_health/school_portal/H1N1%20Influenza

Michigan Department of Community Health

www.michigan.gov/swineflu

Google Map H1N1 Flu Tracking (Colleges and Universities)

<http://tinyurl.com/HigherEdH1N1Map-Sep09>

<http://tinyurl.com/HigherEdH1N1Map>

U.S. Government Influenza information

<http://flu.gov/psa/index.html>