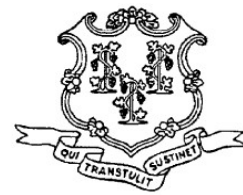


News



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Connecticut Department of Public Health

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Department of Public Health announces 3rd death due to novel H1N1 influenza

Hartford – The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) today announced the state’s third death linked to infection with the novel H1N1 virus. The person, a New Haven County resident, was in the 40 to 49 year old age group and had underlying medical conditions that increased the risk for serious illness from influenza. The person died recently after hospitalization.

“We express our sympathy to the family and friends of this person who recently died due to H1N1,” stated DPH Commissioner Dr. J. Robert Galvin. “While most of the cases we’re seeing in Connecticut recover with only mild illness, the passing of three people due to illness associated with H1N1 underscores the potential severity and devastating impact of influenza.”

The Department of Public Health today reported 693 Connecticut residents have had laboratory-confirmed novel H1N1 influenza, of whom 22 have been hospitalized. Most of these hospitalized persons have recovered and been discharged. Residents from the following counties have been hospitalized: Fairfield (9), New Haven (12), and Hartford (1). Cities with three or more hospitalizations include the following: Bridgeport (3), New Haven (4), Stamford (3), and Waterbury (5). These cities all have populations over 100,000 people.

“We continue to expect more illness from H1N1 influenza in Connecticut,” stated Dr. Galvin. “While most people may experience only mild illness, it appears that H1N1 flu is at least as severe as seasonal flu, and so it won’t be unexpected to see serious illness, including death.” Dr. Galvin noted that every year, approximately 36,000 people die due to seasonal influenza in the United States.

Connecticut and neighboring states are now reporting widespread influenza activity. The national map is available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/update.htm>. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention flu activity classification ranges from "no activity" to "widespread" based on a combination of laboratory confirmed test results and other indicators such as increased numbers of individuals with "influenza-like illness" (ILI) presenting to hospital EDs, clinics, and other medical providers:

No activity: No laboratory confirmed influenza cases, few ILI patients visiting medical providers.

Sporadic: Isolated lab confirmed cases, no increase in ILI patients observed.

Local: An increase in the number of lab confirmed cases and ILI patients observed, but generally confined to one state region or county.

Regional: Increased numbers of lab confirmed cases and ILI patients observed, but generally confined to one or two regions or counties.

Widespread: A large increase in the numbers of lab confirmed cases and ILI patients observed in at least half of the state's regions or counties.

For a list of towns with confirmed cases, please visit www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch. Laboratory-confirmed cases represent only a fraction of the likely number of cases in the state because many persons with mild symptoms do not seek care from a doctor or hospital but recover at home.

DPH is currently not recommending H1N1 influenza testing in outpatients with febrile respiratory illnesses for surveillance purposes. If testing for novel H1N1 influenza is clinically indicated for certain outpatients, health care providers can request testing through a commercial laboratory.

DPH continues to ask residents to take precautions to prevent getting the flu or spreading it by staying home from work or school if they are sick, washing their hands frequently, and coughing or sneezing into their sleeve or a tissue.

For more information on novel H1N1 flu:

- Connecticut Flu Watch: www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch/swineflu
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov
- Call 211

The Connecticut Department of Public Health is the state's leader in public health policy and advocacy with a mission to protect and promote the health and safety of the people of our state. To contact the department, please visit its website at www.ct.gov/dph or call (860) 509-7270.

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