



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

(Kill Date: 9/30/2009)

### **Livingston County Schools Plan for Flu Season**

HOWELL, Michigan (September 22, 2009) (Livingston County Department of Public Health) Livingston County Schools and the Livingston County Department of Public Health (LCDPH) are working together in following the guidance provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) for preventing and managing the spread of H1N1 flu virus in schools.

Schools will not be closed for individual suspected or confirmed cases of H1N1 flu virus unless guidance from CDC or MDCH is modified. The schools will maintain their regular cleaning schedule which in conjunction with good personal hygiene may help reduce influenza transmission. It is most likely that the influenza is spread primarily through close contact. Schools and parents can help contain the spread of the flu virus by encouraging hand washing and respiratory etiquette.

- Wash hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub,
- Don't share personal items like drinks, food or unwashed utensils,
- Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by using the elbow, arm or sleeve instead of the hand when a tissue is unavailable.

- More -

Symptoms of the flu include fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache and feeling very tired.

- Do not send children to school if they are sick. Any children who are determined to be sick while at school *will be sent home*. However, siblings who are not showing symptoms of the flu should attend school.
- Keep sick children at home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have fever or do not have signs of fever, without using fever-reducing drugs. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected.

As the H1N1 vaccine becomes available, LCDPH is recommending priority be given to providers such as obstetricians, pediatricians and family practice physicians, who primarily serve patients in target groups, including pregnant women and children. As there are such a large number of children to be vaccinated in such a short time, LCDPH plans to offer clinics in November at several middle schools and high schools throughout the county. Children of this age infrequently access health care for preventive, non-acute care whereas younger children are more likely to see their health care provider and may be able to receive the H1N1 vaccine at one of those visits.

For more information and a list of clinic dates and places when available, visit the LCDPH web site at [www.lchd.org](http://www.lchd.org).

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