



STATE OF ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH

Donald E. Williamson, MD

State Health Officer

April 27, 2009

Dear Colleague,

Subject: Swine Influenza Outbreak

I wish to update you about the evolving outbreak of swine influenza A (H1N1) virus in humans. At this time, no cases are known to have occurred in Alabama. Confirmed cases have been detected in 5 U.S. states and Mexico. Canada, New Zealand, France, Spain, the United Kingdom and Israel are reporting possible cases. The United States Department of Health and Human Services has declared a Public Health Emergency.

At this time the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) is in close contact with the Governor's office, the Alabama Department of Homeland Security and the Alabama Emergency Management Agency as we prepare for what may lie ahead. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta has stated that it is unlikely that the spread of the virus can be stopped at this time. It is, therefore, likely that Alabama will see cases of swine flu within the next few days or weeks.

In response to this threat, ADPH has activated its Incident Command System and has begun leaning forward with preparations at both the state and local levels. We have activated AIMS, our healthcare monitoring system, and have asked hospitals and community health centers to begin reporting relevant data. Supplies and educational materials are being pushed to county health departments to support our response to the needs of the public.

The President has authorized the CDC to release 25% of our allocation of medications and supplies for Pandemic Influenza response. These will be arriving in the state within the next few days.

At this point in time, your agency should be reviewing and updating your Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) and other response documents. In addition, it is important to encourage your staff to practice good protective measures and to prepare at home:

- Wash your hands often.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your sleeve, not your bare hand.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from anyone who is sick.
- Clean and disinfect any contaminated surfaces.
- If you are sick, stay home.
- Update stockpiles of food, water and medications.

Persons with flu-like symptoms who feel sick enough to seek medical attention should be evaluated by their healthcare provider. Flu-like symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, lethargy, loss of appetite, and occasionally vomiting or diarrhea.

For more information on swine influenza, you may visit www.ADPH.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Williamson'.

Donald E. Williamson, M.D.

State Health Officer