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Press Release
Morris County Office of Health Management
Contact: Pete Summers, Health Officer
973-631-5484

Morris County's local health departments continue to monitor for cases of H1N1 Influenza A. While no new cases have been confirmed over the long weekend Morris County Health Officials are investigating additional suspect cases that they have referred for testing to the New Jersey Public Health Laboratory.

Morris Hills High School where 4 confirmed cases were reported on Thursday has reported normal attendance at school today. Over the weekend 3 additional Morris Hills students were tested. These students are not seriously ill and are currently recovering at home and being cared for by their physician.

In addition, Morris County is also awaiting test results on 3 samples submitted to the State Laboratory on Thursday. These cases were not related to an area school.

While the virus does not live long in the environment, local schools have instituted enhanced cleaning of high touch surfaces. The virus will survive between 2-8 hours after being deposited on a surface. The temporary closing of schools is not considered effective in limiting or preventing the spread of the virus.

"As local health departments continue to investigate sporadic reports of influenza-like illness in their communities, we expect to send additional cases for testing" said Morris County Health Officer Pete Summers. "We anticipate we will have more cases in Morris County. By having our local health departments actively seeking out cases, we can ensure that people are getting treatment, staying home and reducing the risk of exposure to others."

Local health officials continue to encourage people with influenza-like illness, which includes fever (100° or higher), cough or sore throat, to stay home for school or work for 7 days or 24 hours after symptoms disappear, whichever is longer and to contact their health care providers for medical guidance.

The Morris County Office of Health Management has sent guidance to physicians for procedures to follow when reporting influenza like illness. "At this time, we are referring for testing only those admitted to hospitals, or clusters of cases", said Summers. A cluster is defined as two or more individuals with influenza like illness who work or go to school together. "We know that H1N1 is in the community and fortunately it is still acting like a mild flu illness," Summers said.

Most people are recovering at home and can return to work or school after following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for staying home 7 days or

24 hours after symptoms disappear, whichever is longer. When samples are sent to the NJ Public Health Laboratory for testing it general takes 3 days to get results.

The Centers for Disease Control is reporting 6,764 cases nationally. These are confirmed or probable cases. CDC estimates that there are probably over 100,000 people in the U.S. who have or have had H1N1 Influenza only have not met criteria for testing or they recovered at home.

NJ Department of Health and Senior Services is reporting 60 confirmed and probable cases statewide. The recent increase of confirmed H1N1 cases reflects the ability of the Department's Public Health and Environmental Laboratory to confirm H1N1 influenza and allows us to investigate outbreaks of influenza-like illness without sending samples to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for testing. Improved reporting of influenza-like illness from health care providers might have also contributed to the increase in case identification of both H1N1 and seasonal influenza activity.

At this time, public health officials continue to remind residents to wash hands frequently and thoroughly, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and to stay home if sick with influenza-like illness for 7 days or 24 hours after symptoms disappear. Call your health care provider for medical guidance. If you have any other underlying illness or chronic condition, call your health care provider if you are showing any symptoms of influenza-like illness.

For more information, call your local health department, or check for updates on the Morris County Office of Health Management website, www.morris.health.org or the NJ DHSS website <http://nj.gov/health/er/h1n1>.