



## ACTION STEPS FOR PANDEMIC INFLUENZA

### PRIOR TO OUTBREAK/PREPAREDNESS & PLANNING PHASE

- Create a pandemic Influenza plan as a part of the Emergency Response Planning for the year.
- Educate staff, students and parents about: the differences between seasonal Influenza, bird flu and pandemic Influenza; best hygienic practices to prevent any sort of Influenza; what could occur in a pandemic. Work with CHR local health officials and your school nurses.
- Prior to October 15<sup>th</sup>, Parent Letter #1 in this section should be used as a means of preparedness. Send home pamphlets available from the CHR and list of symptoms for pandemic influenza.
- Decide the roles and responsibilities of staff to prevent the spread of Influenza.
- Train staff in Influenza-symptom recognition. Remember that a person who is infected does not show symptoms right away. Children who are getting ill may show different behavior than usual, such as eating less or being irritable.
- Improve the hygiene of students and staff. Use simple non-medical ways to reduce the spread of Influenza by "cough and sneeze etiquette," clean hands, and clean work areas.
- Determine whether the school should be cleaned differently or more often.
- Decide to what extent you will encourage or require children and staff to stay home when they are mildly ill.
- Review the health needs of students. Some students may have a greater risk of infections. Encourage those families to talk to their health care provider. Some parents may need to be more cautious in keeping their children out of school.
- The office staff will track students' names on an Influenza Log Reporting Sheet.
- Insure that Standard Surveillance/Disease Recognition Procedures are in place and implemented.

### **Outbreak of Influenza Disease – Less than 10% of students affected**

- Begin Heightened Surveillance Reporting. (See surveillance definitions in this section.)
- Report any required surveillance information to the CHR Communicable Disease Unit /School Health Nurse.
- Send out Parent Letter #2 informing parents that some students are sick but campuses remain open. Include other resources from CHR and/or others found in the resource section of this document.
- Any communication with the media is to be made by the Superintendent or his designate. Direct any calls to his office for information.

### **Expansion of Outbreak - 10% or more of students affected (but less than 30%)**

- Absenteeism, as collected by the office staff on the Influenza Log sheet, is reported to your School Health Nurse/CHR Communicable Disease Unit on a daily basis.
- Begin Intensive Surveillance Reporting. (See surveillance definitions in this section.)
- Send Parent Letter #3 home informing parents that students are sick but the school remains open. Include resources from CHR and/or others found in the resource section of this document.

### **Continued Expansion of the Outbreak – School Closure is imminent**

- School closure may become necessary – maintain regular contact with superintendent.
- School closures will be determined by the Superintendent or his designate, or by the Calgary Health Region in communications with the Superintendent.
- Send out Parent Letter #4 announcing the closure of the school if required.

### **Following the Outbreak**

- The CHR and/or the Superintendent issue declaration that the school can open.
- Convene/contact the FFCA Critical Response Team to address school needs for recovery.
- Issue Parent Letter #5.
- Continue communicating with School Health Nurse/CHR Communicable Disease Unit.
- Return to Heightened Surveillance Reporting. (See surveillance definitions in this section.)

# DEFINITIONS OF SURVEILLANCE LEVELS

## **Standard Surveillance**

**No Influenza activity reported in the Calgary Health Region.**

- Monitor daily attendance for increased reports of absence due to Influenza-like illness.
- Do not report absences to the Health Nurse/CHR unless they are greater than 10%.

## **Heightened Surveillance**

**Influenza activity reported in the Calgary Health Region (less than 10% school absenteeism due to Influenza-like illness).**

- Monitor daily attendance with the Influenza Reporting Log.
- Have teachers 'check' students during the first hour of school for Influenza-like symptoms.
- Send home students/staff who display Influenza-like symptoms.

## **Intensive Surveillance**

**High numbers of Influenza-like illnesses are reported in the Calgary Health Region (10% or greater school absenteeism due to Influenza-like illness).**

- Monitor daily attendance with the Influenza Reporting Log.
- Send daily absence reports to the School Health Nurse/CHR Communicable Disease Unit.
- Continue morning 'Influenza check'.
- Send home students/staff who display Influenza-like symptoms.
- Begin preparations for potential school closure.