



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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DOH CONFIRMS ADDITIONAL DEATH RELATED TO H1N1 FLU

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) has confirmed novel H1N1 influenza infection in an adult male in his 50s who died at Tripler Army Medical Center on O'ahu. This brings the total number of deaths in Hawai'i with laboratory confirmed 2009 H1N1 Influenza to 11.

The O'ahu resident had a number of underlying medical conditions that contributed to his decline and death. No further information about patient medical conditions before death or identification will be released due to patient privacy considerations and federal law.

"The patient had multiple, additional co-morbidities and these conditions were contributing factors to his death," said Dr. Sarah Park, Chief of the Disease Outbreak Division and State Epidemiologist. "We are continuing to monitor critical case testing and focused clusters to help identify if this pandemic virus changes into something that causes more severe disease."

Similar to what has been observed nationally, underlying conditions such as obesity, smoking, asthma, heart disease, diabetes, and respiratory difficulties have been contributing factors in novel H1N1-related hospitalizations and deaths in Hawai'i.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has information at cdc.gov/h1n1flu/pregnancy/ for pregnant women, who may also be at increased risk for complications from H1N1 influenza infection.

(more)

The public is urged to take the following steps to prevent spreading illness to others:

- Get a seasonal flu vaccination and the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccination when it becomes available. This is especially important for high-risk groups.
- If you become sick, stay at home; isolate yourself from others whenever possible;
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue and dispose of used tissues;
- Wash your hands frequently, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth;
- Seek care if you have flu-like illness (fever > 100°F plus cough or sore throat); and
- Stay healthy by eating a balanced diet, drinking plenty of water, and getting plenty of rest and exercise.

On October 5, Hawai'i received its first shipment of H1N1 vaccine. DOH continues to place vaccine orders according to demand and allocation numbers. Initially, priority groups will be the first to receive the vaccine, and as more becomes available and demand is met, the entire public will be encouraged to receive the vaccine.

In accordance with CDC guidelines, the DOH will give first priority to the following high-risk groups for H1N1 vaccination:

- Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel with direct patient contact;
- Pregnant women;
- Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than age 6 months;
- All people from age 6 months through 24 years; and,
- Persons aged 25 through 64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza.

For more information on H1N1 influenza or the vaccine, please visit flu.hawaii.gov, or call Aloha United Way at 2-1-1. The DOH also is on Twitter. Follow us at www.twitter.com/HIgov_Health.

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