



Columbus Public Health and Franklin County Board of Health



COLUMBUS PUBLIC HEALTH and FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH – Press Release

FOR THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2009

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Columbus Resident Dies from H1N1 Influenza *Public Health Officials Urge Residents to Plan and Prepare*

Columbus Public Health Commissioner Dr. Teresa Long and Franklin County Health Commissioner Susan Tilgner confirm that the first Franklin County resident died today from complications of the H1N1 virus. The decedent, a 20-year-old pregnant woman, was a patient of Ohio Health. The woman's baby was delivered prior to her death and OhioHealth officials report that the baby is doing well.

"Tragically, a local resident has died of H1N1 and our hearts go out to her family," said Dr. Long. "This tragedy reinforces our community is not immune to this worldwide pandemic, and we all need to prepare now to protect ourselves, our families and the entire community."

Both health commissioners point out there are things everyone can do to help prevent H1N1 and seasonal influenza.

- Get a seasonal flu shot.
- Stay home from work or school if you are sick.
- Cover your cough.
- Wash your hands and use alcohol-based hand sanitizers.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Get a H1N1 vaccine when it's available.

An H1N1 vaccine is currently being developed and is expected to be available to priority groups in mid-October. Current priority groups to receive the novel H1N1 vaccine are:

- Pregnant women.
- Healthcare workers and emergency medical responders.
- People caring for infants less than 6 months of age.
- Children and young adults ages 6 months to 24 years.
- People ages 25 to 64 years with underlying medical conditions (e.g. asthma, diabetes).

Combined, these groups would equal approximately 159 million individuals.

Public health continues to track flu illnesses in order to take necessary steps to prevent and control the spread of H1N1 and seasonal influenza. Dr. Long also encourages the community to prepare now by making plans for missed school, childcare and work days or any subsequent closures.

Check Columbus Public Health's Facebook page or Web site at www.columbuspandemicflu.org or www.publichealth.columbus.gov for frequently updated H1N1 information and resources. Additional information also is available at www.odh.ohio.gov or www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu or by calling the Central Ohio Community Flu Hotline at 221-2255.

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