

## Updated Swine Influenza Virus Infection Control Guidance for Healthcare Settings May 1, 2009

On Wednesday, April 29, 2009, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a revised Interim Guidance for Infection Control for Care of Patients with Confirmed, Probable, or Suspected Swine Influenza A (H1N1) Virus Infection in Healthcare Settings, replacing the guidance of April 24. The most significant change in the guidance is the identification of the patients to whom heightened infection precautions for swine influenza apply. There is a single category of patients for whom swine influenza precautions are now recommended in a community where swine influenza A (H1N1) transmission is occurring:

**All** patients with febrile respiratory illness (defined as fever [greater than 37.8° Celsius]) plus one or more of the following: rhinorrhea, nasal congestion, sore throat, cough.

The situation in California has evolved to the point where transmission in communities is either occurring or is likely to soon occur, and the ability to use epidemiological links to identify potentially infectious patients has been lost. Therefore, the Department of Public Health recommends that heightened infection precautions for swine influenza as defined above be used for all patients with febrile respiratory illness. This recommendation applies to all healthcare settings to the extent possible. We recognize that implementing these precautions is a particular challenge in settings such as outpatient, skilled nursing, and dialysis centers. Even in acute care hospitals with operational pandemic influenza plans that have been implemented, exercised, and now activated, problems with maintaining adequate supplies of N95 respirators and antiviral medications and with having sufficient employees trained and fit-tested for respirator use will occur. We at CDPH, along with the CDC, are preparing guidances for settings with particular challenges which will be issued as quickly as possible. Guidance documents for CDPH including an update to the previous guidance for hospitalized patients are at <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/HealthInfo/discond/Pages/SwineInfluenza.aspx> and for CDC at <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/guidance/>. It is important to monitor these sites on a regular basis.

The Department of Public Health is here to assist in keeping healthcare facilities safe for both you and your patients during this difficult time. We have established an email address to be used for questions about infection control for swine influenza at [swinefluinfo@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:swinefluinfo@cdph.ca.gov). We will be as responsive as our resources allow. However, we have limited staff to answer your questions, so your patience will be appreciated.