

Public Health Advisory

Central District Health Department (Idaho Health District 4)

September 17, 2009

To: Child Care Providers and Early Childhood Programs

"CDC Guidance on Helping Child Care and Early Childhood Programs Respond to Influenza during the 2009-2010 Influenza Season"

On September 4, 2009 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published materials to assist child care providers and early childhood program managers to plan and prepare for the flu season. *Child care and early childhood programs include center-based and home-based child care programs, Head Start programs, and other early childhood programs providing care for children in group settings*. The guidance applies to all early childhood programs, even if they provide services to older children.

The Guidance recommends **strategies to use now**, for flu conditions with severity similar to spring/summer 2009 including:

- get vaccinated against the flu;
- stay home when sick;
- conduct daily health checks;
- separate ill children and staff;
- encourage hand washing and cough etiquette for the well and the ill;
- perform routine environmental cleaning;
- encourage early treatment for children and staff at high risk for flu complications;
- and
- consider selective early childhood program closures.

Strategies to add in the event of increased influenza severity include:

- permit high risk staff to stay home;
- increase social distances between children;
- encourage children with ill household members to stay home;
- extend the time that ill people stay home; and
- consider "reactive" or "preemptive" closures.

Central District Health Department strongly encourages child care providers and early childhood program managers to download the **CDC's "Preparing for the Flu including 2009 H1N1 Flu: A communication Toolkit for Child Care and Early Childhood Programs"** at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/childcare>. The 42-page booklet includes in-depth recommendations to implement the strategies listed above as well as a Question and Answer section, Fact Sheets for Parents, Posters, templates for Letters to Parents and additional communication resources.

Throughout the influenza season important information will be posted on the Central District Health Department website at www.cdhd.idaho.gov. In addition, information on

novel influenza A/H1N1 is available on the health department's influenza hotline at (208) 321-2222.

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CHILD CARE & EARLY CHILDHOOD FLU HAN SEP 2009