



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

201 W. Preston Street · Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Martin O'Malley, Governor – Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor – John M. Colmers, Secretary

Community Health Administration

Peter Sybinsky, PhD, Director

Richard Stringer, Deputy Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 6, 2009 **HO Memo #09-041**

TO: Health Officers
Communicable Disease Directors
Communicable Disease Staff
Nursing Directors

FROM: Alvina Chu, MHS
Chief, Division of Outbreak Investigation

THROUGH: Lucy Wilson, MD, ScM
Chief, Center for Clinical Epidemiology

RE: MAY 6 **UPDATED** GUIDANCE FOR SPECIMEN COLLECTION FOR POSSIBLE NOVEL H1N1 INFLUENZA CASES

Epidemiology and Disease Control Programs (EDCP), in conjunction with yesterday's CDC guidance on school closure policies, has again revised its recommendations for healthcare providers for screening and testing possible novel H1N1 "swine flu" cases. This memo replaces the 5/4 guidelines which you just recently received and follows our discussion from 5/5/09. This is a rapidly evolving outbreak, and we are attempting to provide timely guidance.

Testing will now focus on identifying those most severely affected (hospitalized) or working with most vulnerable (healthcare workers) as well as those being evaluated within cluster/outbreak investigation with the clinical features of: T>100°F AND cough or sore throat OR sepsis-like syndrome.

Guidance has been provided to health care providers that viral testing of above individuals should be obtained through nasopharyngeal or throat swabs (Dacron or synthetic on plastic or wire shaft in viral transport media only) or respiratory secretions (regardless of rapid test result) and they should contact their local health department prior to sending the specimen to state public health laboratory.

Attachments:

- 1) INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR SPECIMEN COLLECTION FOR POSSIBLE NOVEL H1N1 INFLUENZA CASES FOR PROVIDERS
- 2) INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR SPECIMEN COLLECTION FOR POSSIBLE NOVEL H1N1 INFLUENZA CASES FOR SENTINEL PROVIDERS AND LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

cc: S. Adams D. Blythe M. Carlos J. Colmers J. DeBoy
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