



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局

Education Bureau

Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
The People's Republic of China

本局檔號 Our Ref.: EDB(SD\_CT)ADM/20/05/1(1)

電話 Telephone:

2 May 2009

To: Supervisors/Principals of all Kindergartens,  
Kindergarten cum Child Care Centres, Secondary, Primary and Special Schools

Dear Supervisor/Principal,

### **Stepping Up Precautionary Measures Against Human Swine Influenza**

The Government has activated the Emergency Response Level under the Preparedness Plan for Pandemic Influenza upon confirmation of an imported case of human swine influenza (Influenza A H1N1) on 1 May 2009. The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of Department of Health (DH) issued a letter on the same day, requesting all schools to take precautionary measures against human swine influenza (please refer to Annex I).

According to CHP's letter of 27 April 2009 to schools, if any student and/or staff of a school is confirmed to be suffering from human swine influenza, the centre would assess the case and may consider advising suspension of classes of that school. The DH would closely monitor the situation and advise on the necessity of a territory-wide suspension of classes, taking into account the latest development. This Bureau would keep in close contact with the DH for providing schools with appropriate advice and guidelines.

Since schools are collective assembly places, we earnestly request schools to act according to the advice stipulated in the letters issued by this Bureau on 27 and 30 April, as well as those by CHP on 27 April, 30 April and 1 May in implementing the precautionary measures. To prevent the spread of human swine influenza in schools, we would like to draw schools' attention to the following:

- Schools should review and activate their contingency measures and establish an effective communication mechanism with parents and staff to facilitate exchange of important messages at all times (including after school hours).
- In case of suspension of classes, schools should adopt appropriate contingency measures, including support for students' learning, and arrangements for learning materials, holiday,

supplementary lessons, tests and examination and staff on duty etc. Schools should discuss with teaching staff on the contingency measures, draw up plans and be prepared for contingency situation.

- Schools should clean and disinfect the school premises thoroughly. Windows should be kept open to ensure good ventilation. For the use of drinking fountains, schools should adhere strictly to the “Guidelines for Using Drinking Fountain in schools” prepared by CHP which was attached to the letter issued by this Bureau on 18 April 2008 (Annex 2).
- Schools should remind parents that before sending their children to schools, they should measure their body temperature, record the reading and sign the temperature record sheet, which should be handed to the school every day. When their children developed influenza-like symptoms such as fever, sore throat and cough, they should consult doctor for medical advice promptly. Parents should not send their sick children to schools. When symptoms have improved and fever has subsided, the sick children should take rest for at least 2 more days before returning to schools.
- For students who have taken sick leave, schools have to arrange appropriate learning support for them. If the leave period covers school tests and examinations, schools should take appropriate measures such as arranging the students concerned to sit for the tests or examinations on their return to schools and the test and examination papers would be marked in the normal manner. Schools should inform parents of such arrangements as early as possible.
- School staff and students having symptoms of respiratory tract infection should wear a mask and seek medical advice as soon as possible to prevent possible spread of the disease. Infected children should be picked up by parents immediately and take rest at home. To meet emergency needs, schools should ensure there is a sufficient stock of masks for use. Schools are also requested to teach children the proper way of wearing masks and post up the relevant notice in schools.
- If suspected outbreak case of influenza is noticed, schools should report the case(s) to the Central Notification Office of DH as soon as possible and fax a copy of the Notification Form to their respective Regional Education Offices / Pre-primary Services Office.

Parents’ support is crucial in preventing spread of communicable diseases. As the Government has activated the above mentioned Emergency Response Level, schools are requested to send a letter to parents again to urge them to pay attention to the personal hygiene of their children and the importance of keeping a clean and healthy living environment. A sample letter to parents is enclosed at Annex 3 for your reference.

A handbook on Prevention of Swine Influenza including issues in handling confirmed cases and arrangements relating to class suspension is under preparation. We would arrange to upload the handbook onto EDB's website once it is ready and schools will be informed accordingly. In the interim, we would disseminate the latest health messages on prevention of communicable disease through our website, including human swine influenza. Schools could click on the navigation bar on "Prevention of Flu and Other Communicable Diseases" on the right hand side of EDB's homepage or browse the information via the following path of webpage:

EDB Homepage > School Administration > Administration > Prevention of Influenza and Other Communicable Diseases in Schools > 1. Prevention of Swine Influenza

If schools encounter difficulties in their procurement of goods and materials for prevention of human swine influenza, they could contact their respective Regional Education Offices / Pre-primary Services Office. Support will be provided as far as possible.

For enquiries, please contact your respective Senior School Development Officers/Pre-primary Services Officer.

Yours sincerely,



(Y F LEE)

for Secretary for Education

監測及流行病學處



Surveillance  
And  
Epidemiology  
Branch

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1 May 2009

Dear Principal/Person-in-charge,

### An imported case of Human Swine Influenza in Hong Kong

I am writing to inform you that the Chief Executive has announced the activation of the **Emergency Response Level** of the Government's Preparedness Plan for Pandemic upon confirmation of an imported case of human swine influenza (H1N1) in a 25-year-old Mexican tourist. I would like to take this opportunity to remind kindergartens and schools to take precautions against swine influenza as mentioned in my letters dated 27 and 30 April 2009.

The patient lives in Uruapan of Mexico and developed respiratory symptoms on 28 April 2009. He travelled with his brother and his friend from Tijuana, Mexico to Shanghai via AeroMexico (flight number AM98) on 29 April 2009, and from Shanghai to Hong Kong via China Eastern Airline (flight number MU505) on 30 April 2009.

He stayed at the Metropark Hotel in Wan Chai and was admitted for treatment and isolation on 30 April. His specimen was positive for influenza A (H1N1) on 1 May. His condition is now stable and has been transferred to Princess Margaret Hospital. The two travel collaterals remained asymptomatic and are also put under isolation.

The Director of Health has ordered Metropark Hotel in Wan Chai to be isolated since 1 May to prevent the spread of human swine flu (Influenza A/H1N1). All staff and lodgers will be quarantined for a period of seven days. Public health personnels from the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health have conducted health inspections for people staying in the hotel. Staff of the Food and Environment Hygiene Department will conduct thorough cleansing



衛生防護中心乃衛生署  
轄下執行疾病預防  
及控制的專業架構  
The Centre for Health  
Protection is a  
professional arm of the  
Department of Health for  
disease prevention and  
control

and disinfection in the hotel. CHP is tracing people with opportunities to have contact with the patient.

If you notice an increase in respiratory illnesses or absenteeism among your staff or students, please report to our Central Notification Office (Tel: 2477-2772; Fax: 2477-2770) for immediate epidemiological investigations and outbreak control.

For the latest information and health education material on human swine influenza, please see our CHP website at [www.chp.gov.hk](http://www.chp.gov.hk).

Yours sincerely,



(Dr Christine WONG)

for Consultant Community Medicine (Communicable Disease)  
Surveillance and Epidemiology Branch  
Centre for Health Protection

## **Guidelines for using drinking fountain in schools**

### **1. Precautions for Users:**

- Children using the fountain should not come in direct contact with the orifice guard.
- Young children are discouraged from drinking directly from the drinking fountain. Individual drinking cups should be used.
- When individual disposable cups are supplied by school, there shall be a suitable container for the unused cups and also a receptacle with cover for disposing of the used cups.
- Expectorating upon the drinking fountain is prohibited.

### **2. Routine Maintenance:**

- All drinking fountains shall be kept in sanitary condition. It should be cleaned regularly with detergent and water during normal cleaning procedure, especially the orifice guard and the pressing button.
- If visibly soiled, the fountain should be cleaned immediately with diluted bleach solution (1 to 99 household bleach solution), and rinsed with clean water afterwards. For metal surface, 70% alcohol is an alternative to diluted bleach solution.
- It is important to maintain the fountain in a functioning condition with an angle jet and a lip guard to ensure the water stream is in sufficient volume and height to be directed and projected so that users cannot contaminate it.
- Drinking fountain should be refrained from use if any leakage, backflow of water or blockage is present.
- School should ensure that the filter inside the drinking fountain should be changed according to the manufacturer's instruction.

*[Sample Letter to Parents]*

*(This sample letter is for reference only. Individual schools should edit the sample letter in the light of their own situation.)*

xx May 2009

Dear Parents,

1. The Government has activated the Emergency Response Level under the Preparedness Plan for Pandemic Influenza upon confirmation of an imported case of human swine influenza (Influenza A H1N1) on 1 May 2009.
2. To protect students' health, we would like to appeal to parents' cooperation again for reminding students to maintain personal hygiene and keep the school environment clean. Please take note of and implement the following measures:
  - Do not send children to school if they have fever (If oral thermometer is used, temperature not higher than 37.5°C (99.5°F) is considered normal. If ear or rectal thermometer is used, the measured temperature will be 0.5°C (0.9°F) higher than that of an oral thermometer. As such, ear or rectal temperature not higher than 38°C (100.4°F) is considered normal.
  - Inform school immediately if children are sick or have been admitted to hospital for surveillance.
  - If children have influenza-like symptoms of fever, coughing, sore throat etc, they should wear a mask and seek medical advice as soon as possible. Please keep sick children at home until symptoms have improved and fever has subsided. Then, take rest for at least 2 more days before returning to school.
  - Co-operate with schools by picking up children not feeling well from school and consulting the doctor immediately.
  - Before sending children to school, measure their body temperature, record the reading and sign the temperature record sheet, which should be handed to the school every day.
  - No spitting. Always wrap nasal and mouth discharges with tissue paper, and dispose of the tissue paper properly in a lidded rubbish bin.
  - Provide children with handkerchiefs or tissue papers and remind them not to share towels or tissue papers with others.
3. We have also urged the drivers of school buses/nanny vans and escorts not to drive/board these vehicles and make suitable arrangements if they run a fever or have any flu symptoms. School and parents will be immediately informed.
4. In case of any students being absent due to sickness, we would provide learning support for them so that their learning progress would not be affected. If the leave period cover school tests and examination, we would arrange the student to sit for the tests or examinations on their return to school and their test and examination papers would be marked in the same way as the other students. As such, parents need not worry.
5. For effective prevention of communicable diseases, we have to be vigilant and strengthen personal and environmental hygiene. Parents' support is important and forms an integral part in combating communicable diseases. We would like to appeal to parents again for collaboration in order to maintain a clean and healthy household environment. Please also remind your children to pay attention to personal hygiene and to take all necessary precautionary measures against communicable diseases.

Principal of (school name)  
Signature of Principal