

HSI Pandemic Mitigation Phase: Guideline on Extra-Curricular Activities

1. Background

Human Swine Influenza (HSI) is causing local transmission in Hong Kong. Although HSI causes a relatively mild illness in most persons, it is efficiently spread, given the lack of antibodies in the population, especially among children and adolescents.

This guidance note provides guidance to organizers and participants for extra-curricular activities. While preventing individual infection with HSI is no longer a first and foremost population health objective, it is important to reduce transmission and avoid large-scale outbreaks. Generally normal social functions and activities can and should continue without disruption.

2. General principles to reduce risk of HSI transmission

- **Segregation of persons with influenza like illness (ILI) from public:** persons with ILI should preferably rest at home till symptoms subside except for essential activities, e.g. to seek medical attention. They should wear face masks and duly observe personal hygiene to protect themselves and others around them.
- **Heightened public awareness on personal hygiene:** the most important elements are frequent and proper hand hygiene, cough etiquette and avoid touching of eyes, nose or mouth as well as the wearing of face masks when ill.
- **Enhanced protective measures for groups at risk of influenza related complications:** this entails individual risk assessment based on personal medical conditions and nature of activities. In general, very young children and those with chronic medical conditions should avoid visiting crowded and poorly ventilated places.
- **Social distancing:** this is achieved by modulating the nature of social activities and the number of participants involved.

3. General advice for organizers

- Pay attention to announcements from the government on the latest public health policy and advice on public functions.
- Make arrangements to reduce overcrowding, taking into account the nature of the venue and activity. The appropriate number of participants varies according to the size, ventilation and hygienic condition of the venue. Having fewer participants per venue reduces the chance of HSI and other respiratory infections. Organizers are advised to limit the group size as far as practicable. Outdoor activities in well ventilated environment may allow for larger groups.
- Crowd control and avoidance of aggregation of people are important irrespective of

group size.

- Ensure adequate ventilation and environmental hygiene.
- Make alcohol handrub readily available at all times and ensure that hand soap is provided in toilet facilities.
- Facilitate the implementation of personal hygiene measures, including provision of face masks.
- Plan for ways to assist people who have ILI.
- Refer to CHP '**Guidelines for Prevention of Respiratory Infections for Organizers of Public Functions**' accessible at http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/Guidelines%20for%20Organizers_20090522_e.pdf

4. General advice for participants

- Those who are sick with ILI should refrain from attending gatherings and seek medical advice promptly.
- Avoid visiting overcrowded or poorly ventilated places.
- Adhere to personal hygienic practice strictly. Wash hands with soap and/or use alcohol handrub frequently.
- Extra vigilance on personal hygiene for participants engaging activities with close body contact e.g. ball games.
- Avoid sharing of personal items with other participants (e.g. towels, water bottles, etc.).
- Refer to CHP '**Guidelines on Prevention of Respiratory Infections for Participants of Public Functions**' accessible at http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/Guidelines_on_Prevention_of_Respiratory_Infections_en.pdf

5. Special advice for activities involving young children under 6 years old

- Young children have less capacity taking care of their own personal hygiene and they tend to have a greater intensity of direct physical contact with other children and persons.
- It is advisable to adjust the size of group activities for young children such that adequate adult supervision can be given to individual child to ensure good hygiene at all times.
- There should be adequate adult and preferably parent's supervision to ensure personal hygiene of children.

- Ball pools and other activities involving lots of simultaneous sharing of toys among many young children should be suspended.
 - Toys and other objects shared by young children should be cleansed and disinfected frequently, and immediately if soiled.
 - The venue should be thoroughly cleansed between each session of activities before another group of children comes in.
 - For details of recommendations on infection control for recommendations for Kindergartens /Kindergartens-cum-Child Care Centres / Child Care Centres, please refer to the CHP '**Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases in Schools / Kindergartens /Kindergartens-cum-Child Care Centres / Child Care Centres**' accessible at http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/School_full_eng_20090115.pdf
6. **Special advice for children with chronic medical conditions which may prone them to complications of influenza infection**
- If visiting to crowded and poorly ventilated environment is unavoidable, face mask are recommended for older children and these should be worn properly.
 - Seek medical advice on need for additional measures.
7. In case of enquiry, please call CHP hotline 21251111.