



PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

December 9, 2013

To: Licensed Acute Care Hospitals, Skilled Nursing Facilities, Long-Term Care Facilities, and Intermediate Care Facilities

From: Eric Walsh M.D., Dr.P.H., Health Officer and Director, City of Pasadena

RE: Health Advisory: Mandatory Influenza Vaccination of Health Care Personnel (HCP)

This is to inform you that I am issuing a Health Officer Advisory that requires mandatory influenza vaccination for health care personnel in acute care, skilled nursing facilities, long-term care facilities and intermediate care facilities for the influenza season.

The City of Pasadena Public Health Department shares with the city's health care professionals and facilities the goal that our population receives safe and effective care. In an effort to lower the risk of transmission of influenza to patients in these facilities, increase HCP influenza vaccination rates, reduce employee absenteeism, and protect the City of Pasadena residents from influenza infection, we trust that all facilities subject to this health advisory will comply fully with it and will notify their HCP of its provisions.

Eric Walsh, M.D., Dr.P.H.
Director of Public Health / Health Officer



PASADENA PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

December 10, 2013

HEALTH ADVISORY

Mandatory Influenza Vaccination of Healthcare Personnel (HCP)

TO: Licensed Acute Care Hospitals, Skilled Nursing Facilities, Long-Term Care Facilities, and Intermediate Care Facilities.

FROM: Eric Walsh M.D., Dr.PH, Health Officer, City of Pasadena

The 2013-14 influenza season has officially begun. Therefore, I am reminding all Pasadena acute care hospitals of their obligation to annually offer free influenza vaccinations on-site to their employees and require all to be vaccinated. Any employee who elects not to be vaccinated must provide the hospital with written declaration that he or she has declined the vaccination [CA Health and Safety Code §1288.7(a)]. Influenza is a highly communicable disease. For healthcare personnel that decline influenza vaccination, healthcare facilities must implement a plan to prevent on-site healthcare workers affiliated with the facility from contracting and transmitting the virus to patients. Such plan may include requiring workers to wear mask for the duration of influenza season, reassigning work activities, or other action appropriate to the individual facility, Influenza season is defined as November 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014.

Flu in the workplace can lead to increase absences, lower productivity, and higher medical cost. In addition, nosocomial transmission from healthcare personnel to patients has been documented in a variety of acute care settings including neonatal intensive care units, pediatric and general wards, transplant units, oncology units, and emergency departments. Influenza vaccine will effectively reduce influenza and lead to decreased illness among personnel, decreased staff absenteeism, and would logically lead to decreased morbidity and mortality among patients.

- Studies suggest that up to 25% of healthcare personnel are infected with influenza each season.
- Healthcare personnel may be more likely to work when ill than other professions, which increase the risk for flu transmission in healthcare facilities.
- As many as 1 in 2 infected people never show classic flu symptoms, but can shed virus for 5-10 days. Thus, asymptomatic personnel can spread influenza unknowingly.

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- Patient admissions and healthcare personnel absenteeism are typically higher during the flu season, which increases the impact of flu-related absenteeism on operations of these health care facilities.
- Influenza infection that is acquired during a hospital stay (nosocomial) leads to increased hospital days and mortality for inpatients and the CDC notes that higher staff vaccination levels have been associated with lower risk of nosocomial flu cases and mortality.

Definition of Healthcare Personnel

Defined as a person, paid or unpaid, working in a healthcare setting who has direct patient contact or works in any patient care area.

We appreciate your help and supports protecting the residents of our community. If you have questions please contact the Pasadena Public Health Department (626) 744-6089.