



FEB. 3, 2012

HEALTH ADVISORY

Reporting Influenza and Gastrointestinal Outbreaks

The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) is asking for your assistance in identifying outbreaks of influenza and influenza-like illness (ILI), as well as outbreaks of gastrointestinal illness in North Dakota long-term and basic care facilities. Reporting outbreaks of illness helps the NDDoH describe the impact that influenza and gastrointestinal illness have on the state’s residents. The criteria for reporting are as follows.

<u>Influenza Outbreak</u>	<u>Gastrointestinal Outbreak</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three or more cases of ILI that occur within 48 to 72 hours of each other and in residents/staff that are in close proximity to each other. • One resident with a positive laboratory test for influenza. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two or more cases of vomiting and/or diarrhea that occur within 48 to 72 hours of each other and in residents/staff that are in close proximity to each other.

In the event of an outbreak, the NDDoH may be able to provide testing and specimen collection supplies at no charge for a number of residents and/or staff meeting the above case definitions to help identify the causative agent of the illness occurring in your facility and the community. Ill staff members working on the same area or unit can be considered part of the outbreak in addition or in the absence of ill residents (must adhere to outbreak case definition).

The primary method for reporting influenza outbreaks will be via the online report form found at www.ndflu.com. Select the “Reporting” link located in the frequently requested box on the right side of the screen and then click on “Influenza-like Illness Outbreak Reports” to access the form. Complete the form and click on the “submit” button on the bottom of the page.

For information on infection control guidelines and recommendations for preventing and controlling influenza transmission in long-term care facilities, please visit www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/ltc-facility-guidance.htm.

To report gastrointestinal illness outbreaks, please go to www.ndhealth.gov/disease and under current issues, select “GI Outbreak Reporting Form.”

For more information on infection control guidelines and recommendations for viral gastroenteritis in long-term care facilities, please visit www.ndhealth.gov/disease/GI/norovirus.aspx.

Alternatively, if you believe an outbreak is occurring in your facility, please call the Division of Disease Control at 701.328.2378 or 800.472.2180.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

- *Health Alert conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.*
- *Health Advisory provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.*
- *Health Update provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary.*
- *Health Information provides general information that is not necessarily considered to be of an emergent nature.*

This message is being sent to local public health units, clinics, hospitals, physicians, tribal health, North Dakota Nurses Association, North Dakota Long Term Care Association, North Dakota Healthcare Association, North Dakota Medical Association, and hospital public information officers.