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PCR-CONFIRMED INFLUENZA TYPE A IDENTIFIED IN WASHOE COUNTY

The Washoe County Health District's (WCHD) Communicable Disease (CD) Program has received the first reports of PCR-confirmed influenza in Washoe County for this season. Two specimens submitted have tested positive for influenza type A by reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR). One was tested through the Nevada State Public Health Laboratory and was seasonal influenza A (H3). This specimen was collected by a local emergency department from an adult over 65 years of age. The other specimen was tested through a local laboratory and was identified as influenza A, but it was not subtyped. This specimen was collected by a local urgent care facility from an adult between 25-49 years of age. The positive

specimens were collected during CDC week 41 (week ending October 12, 2013) and CDC week 43 (week ending October 26, 2013). Although these are the first PCR-confirmed cases, an additional eight positive cases have been reported by rapid testing so far this influenza season. Please refer to Table 1 for complete details.

Influenza is a reportable disease as defined in Nevada Administrative Code 441A. Washoe County health care providers must report influenza cases with a positive laboratory test (including rapid tests performed in the office or lab) by faxing reports to (775) 328-3764 or by calling the Communicable Disease Program at (775) 328-2447.

Table 1 Lab-confirmed influenza cases reported by type and subtype, Washoe County, 2013-14 Influenza Season

Influenza A (2009 H1N1)	Influenza A (Seasonal H1)	Influenza A (Seasonal H3)	Influenza A Not subtyped	Influenza A, Rapid Test	Influenza B (PCR)	Influenza B, Rapid Test	Influenza Type Unknown	Total
0	0	1	1	2	0	4	2	10

WASHOE COUNTY INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM

The Washoe County Health District's 2013-2014 influenza surveillance season began on September 29, 2013, and will continue through May, 2014.

Goals of the program are to:

- ◆ Characterize the prevailing strains of influenza in the community,
- ◆ Measure the impact of the disease in the community, and
- ◆ Obtain and disseminate information regarding influenza activity to health care providers, the public and those concerned with control measures.

The influenza surveillance program consists of six major components:

- 1) Weekly reports of influenza-like illness (ILI) to the Communicable Disease Program by selected sentinel health care providers. Twelve sentinel providers have agreed to participate this season. They include four hospital emergency departments, one family practice office, one student health service, and six urgent care facilities:
 - ◆ Family Medicine Associates
 - ◆ UNR Student Health Center
 - ◆ Northern Nevada Medical Center
 - ◆ Renown Regional Medical Center
 - ◆ Renown South Meadows Medical Center
 - ◆ Saint Mary's Regional Medical Center
 - ◆ Renown Urgent Care (six locations)

Each site sends weekly reports tallying the numbers of patients who meet the case definition of ILI and the total numbers of patients seen at that site for any reason. The case definition for ILI is fever ($\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$ [37.8°C], oral or equivalent) AND cough and/or sore throat (in the absence of a KNOWN cause other than influenza). Patients who meet the case definition but

have diagnostic tests to confirm another cause (e.g., a positive strep or RSV test) are not counted as ILI.

- 2) The collection of a limited number of specimens by sentinel health care providers from persons with ILI. The purpose of the laboratory component is to monitor when influenza arrives in the community and verify which types of influenza virus are circulating.
- 3) Monitoring of influenza/pneumonia mortality through death certificates. Deaths due to pneumonia and influenza (P&I deaths) are reported weekly as a proportion of all deaths recorded in Washoe County. The number of P&I deaths each week are compared to national levels, as well as, to the number that would be expected in the absence of an influenza epidemic.
- 4) Investigate all laboratory confirmed hospitalized cases and pediatric deaths that occur.
- 5) Health care providers, daycares, school nurses and extended care facilities who see an unusually high incidence of ILI in their setting are encouraged to report to the WCHD by calling (775) 328-2447.
- 6) Syndromic surveillance systems which monitor near real-time over-the-counter sales for cough &/or cold remedies, and real-time REMSA calls for respiratory illnesses.

The information collected is reported weekly and can be accessed at the following website: <http://www.washoecounty.us/health/cdpp/is.html>. For additional information, please contact Melissa Peek at (775) 328-2447. Multiple, ready-to-print influenza patient education materials are available on the following website: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/index.htm>.

Please share this information with all physicians/staff in your facility/office.