

To: All PD & Hemodialysis Nurse Managers, and Medical Directors
From: Peggy Lynch, RN
Date: April 28, 2009
RE: SWINE INFLUENZA REPORTING

The CDC has activated its Emergency Operations Center to coordinate the agency's response to the emerging health threat of the Swine influenza virus. In order to assist public health officials in identifying new cases & addressing the challenges posed by this strain of influenza virus the Network seeks your assistance.

If any ESRD patient presents with febrile respiratory illness clinicians should consider the possibility of swine influenza virus infection. If swine flu is suspected, a respiratory swab should be taken & stored in the refrigerator (not freezer). **Contact your state department of health for information on test kits.** Once collected the state or local health department should be contacted to facilitate transport & timely diagnosis at a state public health laboratory.

All confirmed cases of swine flu in New England ESRD patients should be reported to the Network at 203-387-9332.

Please visit the CDC site for further information at: <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/index.htm> or go to www.networkofnewengland.org for individual state swine flu directives.

Swine Flu Outbreak

The CDC has identified human cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) virus infection in people in the U.S. The CDC is working with local and state health agencies to investigate these cases. The CDC has determined that this virus is contagious and is spreading from human to human. However, at this time, the CDC has not determined how easily the virus spreads between people. As with any infectious disease, the CDC is recommending the following precautionary measures.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- **Dialysis patients should still continue to go to treatment.**

There is no vaccine available at this time, so it is important for people living in these areas to take steps to prevent spreading the virus to others. People who live in these areas who develop an illness with fever and respiratory symptoms, such as cough and runny nose, and possibly other symptoms, such as body aches, nausea, or vomiting or diarrhea, should contact their health care provider. Their health care provider will determine whether influenza testing is needed.

Clinicians should consider the possibility of swine influenza virus infections in patients presenting with febrile respiratory illness who:

1. Live in an area where human cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) has been identified or
2. Have traveled to an area where human cases of swine influenza A (H1N1) has been identified or
3. Have been in contact with ill persons from these areas in the 7 days prior to their illness onset.

If swine flu is suspected, clinicians should obtain a respiratory swab for swine influenza testing and place it in a refrigerator (not a freezer). Once collected, the clinician should contact their state or local health department to facilitate transport and timely diagnosis at a state public health laboratory.

ESRD providers should continue to **closely monitor the CDC website (<http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>) and your local media for information.** If you have a suspected case, please inform your local ESRD Network.

Pandemic resources are available from the KCER Coalition at www.kcercoalition.com.