



Grant County Health District – Always Working for a Healthier and Safer Grant County

Ephrata Office County Courthouse
PO Box 37, Ephrata, WA 98823
509-754-6060

Moses Lake Office
1038 West Ivy Suite 1, Moses Lake WA 98837
509-766-7960

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 04/30/2009 TO: School Superintendents and Directors (K-12) Childcare Providers Preschools	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Alexander Brzezny, MD, MPH, Grant County Health Officer Peggy Grigg, RN, BSN Director of Personal Health Services/Administrator 509-754-6060 x26
---	--

As we prepare for cases of “swine flu” also referred to as “North American Influenza”, please be advised that in the event of a probable or confirmed case (by CDC definitions) of H1N1 in a public or private school in Grant County, the Grant County Health Officer plans to issue by directive an order for the dismissal of that school and its campus for a period of no less than 7 days after exposure to the probable or confirmed case.

This closure will be applicable to the school building or buildings that the case attended during the infectious period, as well as any associated campus, which would include shared dining, activities, busing, etc. This means that if a student from school building A develops the disease and had library or gym in building B, then building B would be affected as well. Dismissal for 7 days will also be applicable to any students riding the bus with the infected individual.

Dismissal of school would be accompanied by Public Health Directive to all those who have been exposed to remain at home and not attend extra-curricular activities, church activities, community activities or community sites such as libraries, movies, stores, etc., and they will be directed to NOT enroll for school elsewhere.

During the 7 day time period, the Grant County Health District will implement calling to the families of those who are dismissed from school, to monitor for symptoms. School staff may be asked to assist. Signs will be posted, etc. Students and staff will all be screened for symptoms before being readmitted to school.

The duration and size of a school dismissal could be expanded by the local health officer, depending on the status of the outbreak at that time. Full district closure(s) could be a possibility.

WE are requesting that you advise students, staff and families regarding the possibility of cases. Please prepare and distribute written communications regarding the following:

- STAY HOME WHEN ILL.
- Wash hands frequently.
- Cover cough.
- Develop a family plan about what to do if children are ill and can not attend child care.
- Develop a family plan about what to do if school is dismissed.

At this time there are many unknown factors including transmissibility and severity of disease related to this virus. We don't know yet how our county will be affected. It is important to note that 81% of identified cases at this time are in individuals under age 18.

Recommendations and requirements will be modified as appropriate as more information becomes available nationally, statewide and locally.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and your support in these efforts. Please call 509-754-6060, ext 26, if you have questions or if communication with the Health Officer is desired.

###