

Memo

To: Haldimand Norfolk Health Care Providers

From: Infectious Disease & COVID Response Team

Date: November 2, 2023

Re: First Confirmed Influenza A case in Haldimand and Norfolk Counties for 2023-2024 Season

We have received notification of the first lab confirmed case within Haldimand and Norfolk Counties for this year's influenza season.

Sporadic influenza activity has been detected in other regions in Ontario; however, this is the first confirmed case of Influenza A in Haldimand and Norfolk Counties for this season. Please have a high level of suspicion of Influenza in anyone presenting with influenza-like symptoms such as abrupt onset of fever, myalgia, headache, severe malaise, non-productive cough, sore throat and rhinitis.

As of December 7, 2022 - PHO's laboratory will perform **multiplex respiratory virus PCR (MRVP)** testing on the following eligible persons:

1. Symptomatic children (<18 years) seen in the Emergency Department (ED)
2. Symptomatic hospitalized patients (ward and ICU/CCU)
3. Symptomatic residents in institutional settings (non-outbreak)
4. Specimens from the first four symptomatic individuals (including healthcare workers/staff) in an outbreak that request respiratory virus testing

HNHU recommends the following:

Vaccination

- Ensure high risk populations, including those who work with high-risk groups are vaccinated against Influenza.
- Encourage all community members to obtain an annual influenza vaccination.

Anti-Viral Medications

- When influenza is circulating, laboratory confirmation of influenza is not needed before initiating treatment, as waiting until influenza is confirmed will delay initiation of therapy.
- Current clinical guidelines recommend that during influenza season, influenza antiviral therapy (e.g., oseltamivir or zanamivir) be started empirically for patients with:
 - Moderate, progressive, severe or complicated influenza, such as individuals who are hospitalized with influenza-like illness; OR
 - Compatible symptoms who are at high risk of influenza complications/severe disease. Please see the following document for more information: [Antiviral Medications for the 2023-24 Seasonal Influenza: Public Health Consideration](#).

Report any suspect and/or confirmed communicable diseases to the Health Unit by calling **519-426-6170** &/or **905-318-6623 ext. 3438** or by **fax 519-426-4767**

Thank you,

Infectious Disease & COVID Response Teams
519-426-6170 ext. 3438

Notice – Email Communication

You are receiving this notification by email address provided by the CPSO for COVID-19 Communications. HNHU is now sending regular non-COVID communications on Infectious Disease and other Health Topics via this email. Please contact our team at idt@hnhss.ca if you wish to opt out of this process.