



Tom Barrett
Mayor

Bevan K. Baker, FACHE
Commissioner of Health

Health Department

Administration

Frank P. Zeidler Municipal Building, 841 North Broadway, 3rd Floor, Milwaukee, WI 53202-3653 phone (414) 286-3521 fax (414) 286-5990
web site: www.milwaukee.gov/health

For Immediate Release
June 9, 2009

Media Contact:

Kawanza Newson
414-286-3548 Office
414-732-7250 Mobile

City of Milwaukee Health Department Partners With Harvard University to Conduct H1N1 Data Analysis *Health Officials Say Nearly 1500 Cases in Milwaukee*

The City of Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) is partnering with researchers from the Harvard University School of Public Health to study data generated from the swine flu outbreak response in the City of Milwaukee.

The collaboration with Harvard researchers will assist Milwaukee public health officials in better characterizing the magnitude and spread of disease in the community, as well as study transmissibility patterns in clustered settings such as households and schools. This information in turn may provide validation on whether the high number of confirmed cases in the City is related to early enhanced surveillance by the MHD, aggressive testing and excellent laboratory capacity locally and state-wide, earlier exposure and more widespread disease than other municipalities, or some other variables.

“This is an exciting opportunity for the Health Department and for the City,” said Mayor Tom Barrett. “Clearly, something unique is happening here and I look forward to learning more about this novel virus that is prevalent in our city.”

“This collaboration will provide great insight into what is currently happening in our community and will enhance our ability to make real-time public health decisions if the virus should re-emerge this fall,” said Commissioner of Health Bevan K. Baker.

As of Monday, there were nearly 1500 confirmed cases of novel H1N1 influenza infection reported in the City of Milwaukee and over 2400 in the State of Wisconsin. Wisconsin leads the nation in the number of confirmed cases in the US.

H1N1 case counts continue to rise across the country. The CDC has confirmed 27 deaths from this disease nationwide and expects the number of hospitalizations and deaths to continue to rise. The previously reported Milwaukee death is not included in this count.

MHD officials again stressed that any person in Milwaukee who has symptoms consistent with influenza stay home from work or school to help slow the spread of disease and to minimize the risk to others.

Persons with symptoms should also consult with their healthcare provider. Symptoms of influenza include fever, cough, and sore throat. Staying home when ill is very important to prevent exposing high-risk individuals, such as pregnant women or people with weak immune systems, to this new virus.

Some ways to stay healthy and to protect yourself and those around you from getting the flu include:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with your upper sleeve. If you use a tissue, throw it away after one use.
- Use your own drinking cups and straws.
- Avoid being exposed to people who are sick with flu-like symptoms.
- Stay home when you are sick.

- Eat nutritious meals, get plenty of rest and do not smoke.

To learn more about swine influenza, visit <http://pandemic.wisconsin.gov/> or www.milwaukee.gov/health.
Or visit us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/MKEhealth> or in Spanish at <http://twitter.com/MKEsalud>.