

## MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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### H1N1 continues to be transmitted in British Columbia

**VANCOUVER, BC** – The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) is reminding British Columbians who are suffering from fever and cough to continue taking necessary precautions to limit the spread of the H1N1 (Human Swine Flu) virus.

H1N1 continues to be transmitted throughout the province, and in recent weeks BC has seen an increase in the number of lab confirmed cases of H1N1, as well as an increase in doctor visits by patients experiencing influenza-like illness.

“People who are sick should take measures not to infect others, including staying home from work or school, coughing into a sleeve or a tissue and frequently washing their hands,” explains Dr. Perry Kendall, British Columbia’s Provincial Health Officer. “Reinforcing these messages is particularly important as we begin to enjoy summer activities - a few wise practices will allow people to carry on with summer fun.”

BC is working closely with health professionals across the province to draft guidelines focused on reducing the spread of influenza in summer camps, and will work with the camps to ensure appropriate strategies are in place.

“While H1N1 illness has been mild in the vast majority of cases, Canadian experience in recent weeks reminds us that a small proportion of individuals infected will get quite ill,” explains Dr. David Patrick, Director of Epidemiology Services with the BCCDC.

To date, seven lab confirmed cases of H1N1 have been hospitalized in BC, and two (one in the Fraser Valley and one on Vancouver Island) have been admitted to Intensive Care Units.

While most people infected with H1N1 will recover without difficulty, the BCCDC is reminding individuals at high risk of complications from the flu to see their doctors early if they are experiencing symptoms which may include fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, sneezing, headache, general aches or fatigue. Some may also experience vomiting or diarrhea.

These high-risk individuals include:

- Those with underlying medical illness such as asthma, lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, cancer or those with weakened immune systems;
- Those with a cough and high fever (over 39.5°C) or shortness of breath;
- Pregnant women.

In these specific cases, an early start on antiviral therapy can reduce the likelihood of hospitalization.

British Columbia continues to closely monitor this virus, and work has begun globally on a H1N1 vaccine. For more information on H1N1, or if you have symptoms compatible with H1N1 infection, please call BC HealthLink at 811, or visit [www.gov.bc.ca/govt/swine\\_flu.html](http://www.gov.bc.ca/govt/swine_flu.html) or [www.bccdc.ca](http://www.bccdc.ca).