MOUNT CROSBY STATE SCHOOL

Tuesday 26 May, 2009

Arrangements for schools regarding Influenza H1N1 (Human Swine Flu)

Dear Parent/Carer

As you may be aware, a decision has been made at a national level to introduce a range of additional measures to reduce the spread of Influenza H1N1 09 (Human Swine Flu). These measures are a response to the fact that Australia has moved from the Pandemic Influenza phase ***Delay*** to the current phase ***Contain***. The key Government objective of the ***Contain*** phase is to limit the spread of the virus.

Students returning from overseas

Among these measures is an agreement that all States and Territories ***move to excluding, for a seven-day period***, school students from schools that are returning or arriving from the following overseas countries: Mexico, United States of America, Canada, Panama and Japan. This list can be found on the Department of Health and Ageing website: www.healthemergency.gov.au and is reviewed regularly in light of the current situation. In Queensland we are referring to this period as a seven-day timeout period.

The seven-day timeout period allows time for the illness to appear if the student has acquired the illness. The seven-day timeout period is only considered at this stage necessary for primary and secondary schools. This is because outbreaks overseas have only been reported in school settings to date.

If you have a child who has returned or is to return from one of the affected areas, could you please advise the school and ensure that your child remains at home for seven days even if they do not have symptoms. The seven days includes weekends and public holidays. If your child becomes unwell, please seek immediate medical advice from your general practitioner.

This seven-day timeout period from school following travel in a country of concern will aid in slowing the spread of the disease and limit the possibility of school closure due to an outbreak in the school.

Event of school closure

In the event of a confirmed case of Influenza H1N1 (Human Swine Flu) in a student attending your school, the school will be closed for up to seven days.

During a school closure – or if your child is involved in a seven-day timeout period – every attempt will be made to provide schoolwork. This may be placed on the school website, emailed or mailed home. Parents and students will be asked to remain connected to school via the internet and to keep in contact with teachers through email where possible.

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Sue Phillips
Principal

Jill Brooks
Deputy Principal

There will however be no school supervision provided to children on the seven-day timeout. Parents can assist schools to manage the current situation in the following ways:

- Provide the school with current contact details including current address, telephone number, mobile phone number and email address and any other information you may consider to be relevant.
- Continue to follow standard good hygiene practices such as covering nose and mouth if sneezing or coughing and regular hand-washing.
- Be diligent in observing your family's health and seek medical assistance where uncertain.
- Ensure children avoid major gatherings e.g. sporting events and shopping centres during the seven-day timeout period or school closure.

Queensland Health continues to closely monitor this situation and should it change, the school community will be advised immediately. Please stay informed by paying attention to media reports. Updates will be available on the Department of Education and Training website as www.det.qld.gov.au and your school's website www.mtcrosbyss.eq.edu.au

If you have any questions about symptoms or illness you can call 13HEALTH (13432584) 24 hours a day, seven days a week or contact your regular health practitioner.

For other information please contact the School.

Yours sincerely

Sue Phillips
Principal