

Glen Abbot Ltd.

Swine Flu Briefing 14 – 18/05/2009

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Current Situation:

Mexico has reported 2895 laboratory confirmed human cases of infection, including 66 deaths. The United States has reported 4714 laboratory confirmed human cases, including four deaths including the first in New York City. Canada has reported 496 laboratory confirmed human cases, including one death. Costa Rica has reported nine laboratory confirmed human cases, including one death.

The United Kingdom has 101 cases with no deaths. The HPA said there were currently 155 possible cases of the virus under investigation in UK laboratories.

The following countries have reported laboratory confirmed cases with no deaths - Argentina (1), Australia (1), Austria (1), Belgium (4), Brazil (8), China (5), Colombia (11), Cuba (3), Denmark (1), Ecuador (1), El Salvador (4), Finland (2), France (14), Germany (14), Guatemala (3), India (1), Ireland (1), Israel (7), Italy (9), Japan (7), Malaysia (2), Netherlands (3), New Zealand (9), Norway (2), Panama (54), Peru (1), Poland (1), Portugal (1), Republic of Korea (3), Spain (103), Sweden (3), Switzerland (1), Thailand (2), Turkey (1) .

The 62nd session of the World Health Assembly is scheduled to take place in Geneva during 18-22 May 2009. At this session, the Health Assembly will discuss a number of public health issues, including pandemic influenza preparedness: sharing of influenza viruses and access to vaccines and other benefits.

The UK Foreign Office has lifted its advice against non-essential travel to Mexico.

The western Japanese city of Kobe said it would close some public schools for a week after eight people were confirmed as being infected with H1N1.

Three of the eight were teenage students from the same school -- the first confirmed cases in Japan involving people who had not been overseas. The other five were from another school, Kyodo news agency said.

"We are just watching the developments very carefully," acting assistant WHO Director-General Keiji Fukuda told reporters. Fukuda said it was not clear at this stage whether the outbreak in Japan would cause the WHO to declare a full pandemic.

So is Bird Flu over?

Anyone who has been on one of my courses will have heard quotes from virologist John Oxford and he has now said that 'swine flu was probably being beaten' and that he was more worried about on-going bird flu.

Incubation Periods

I have covered this a number of times, but it is a point I get asked on regularly at talks so here is the NHS view...

The incubation period (the time from being exposed to the virus to showing symptoms of infection) is from one to four days: for most people, it will be two to three days.

In terms of the infectious period (how long you are infectious to others), people are most infectious soon after they develop symptoms, and remain infectious to some extent until the symptoms disappear. In general, adults can continue to spread flu virus for up to five days, and children for up to seven days, but occasionally longer. Over this period, the amount of virus, and therefore the infection risk to others, will decline as symptoms improve, but does not disappear until the symptoms themselves have disappeared.

Cleaning

Again I get many questions about cleaning and decontamination. I thought this section from the Scottish Government's paper for the Hospitality Industry may be of interest. It refers to action for cleaners in a hotel where a guest has been diagnosed with flu.

Room decontamination. *Staff who clean rooms occupied by ill guests must wear an apron and gloves before entering the room. Wearing a face mask is only necessary if the guest is in the room at the same time.*

- ventilate the room by opening external windows
- remove the bed linen and towels and place in a bag
- do not leave loose items in the hotel corridor
- dispose of all disposable items such as sachets and toilet rolls
- clean remaining items such as cups, glasses etc using water and detergent
- apply your chosen cleaning product and allow the "contact time" stated by manufacturers, before wiping clean

- *pay particular attention to hand contact surfaces eg door handles, light switches, telephone handsets, TV remote control, bedside tables*
- *use plenty of disposable cleaning cloths to avoid re-contaminating surfaces*

Future Briefings

Given that changes are now happening slowly I will issue briefings on Monday and Thursday from now on unless there are significant changes . All briefings are available at our website:

www.glenabbot.co.uk

Training and Consultancy

We provide specific pandemic training courses both publicly and bespoke to companies. If you are interested please contact me directly or email Geoff Howard at Continuity Shop (gHoward@continuityshop.com).

We can also help organisation review or create plans so if you need any assistance please contact me via this email or Andrew Sinclair on Andrew.sinclair@glenabbot.co.uk. Our office number is 01738 580580.

Yours sincerely



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