

Mayors Advisory

October 3, 2014

RE: Public Health Information: Flu Season has Begun and Enterovirus Hits New Jersey

Dear Mayor:

October 1 marked the official beginning of flu season, here in the Garden State. We wanted to remind you of the information and resources you and your residents can access on the Department of Health's website.

At <http://www.nj.gov/health/flu/generalinfo.shtml> you are just a click away from finding out:

- What you need to know to stay healthy during flu season;
- Tips to take care of yourself and others, should you get the flu;
- When children should stay home from school; and
- How to distinguish the flu from a cold.

Also on that site, you and your residents can access the "Find a flu shot" locator at <http://www.nj.gov/health/flu/findflushot.shtml>. By just entering a zip code, you can use this tool to learn the locations for inoculations that are closest to you.

You will also find there a link to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Seasonal Flu website (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>), which includes some excellent free educational resources, including printed material, podcasts and PSAs.

At the Department's website, you can also access information on the threat posed by Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68). As of October 1, there were seven laboratory confirmed cases of the disease (which has already killed four people, nationwide) in the Garden State. According to the CDC, 443 cases of EV-D68 have been confirmed in 40 states and the District of Columbia since mid-August.

The Department is working with health care providers and local health departments to closely monitor for increases in respiratory illnesses in hospitals across the state. There is an existing surveillance system in place to monitor flu-like activity and the Department will use that process to monitor for EV-D68. The link for more information on this threat is <http://www.nj.gov/health/cd/ev-d60/index.shtml>.

The New Jersey Department of Health does a great job in providing the people of New Jersey with resources and information that they can use on these and other public health matters. We appreciate it.

Very truly yours,

William G. Dressel, Jr.
Executive Director