



METRO NORTH PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT

Enquiries to: Public Health Nurse
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14/02/2019

Dear Parents and Staff,

Re: Influenza

The Metro North Public Health Unit has been notified of three confirmed cases of influenza and a number of cases of influenza-like-illness in the school community of Windsor State School. The following recommendations will assist in the prevention of the spread of influenza illness at the school.

All children and adults should stay away from school and crowded areas or public gatherings if they develop influenza-like symptoms, such as fever, cough, and sore throat, until symptoms have resolved, normally 5-7 days.

Hand hygiene and respiratory/cough etiquette, such as regular hand washing and covering your mouth whilst coughing, are thought to reduce transmission of influenza and voluntary home isolation of those with the illness may have significant impact on reducing disease spread.

Children and adults who are considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness should see their doctor immediately if they develop symptoms. Early treatment of people at risk of complications is an important measure to prevent serious illness.

The following groups are regarded as vulnerable and are **at increased risk of severe disease** from respiratory illnesses like influenza and are eligible for free seasonal influenza vaccine:

- Pregnant women at any stage of pregnancy
- All children aged 6 months to less than 5 years
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged ≥ 15 years
- All adults aged ≥ 65 years
- People aged 6 months and over who have medical conditions predisposing to severe influenza, such as diabetes and chronic respiratory conditions.

The best protection against influenza is vaccination. Influenza vaccine takes about 2 weeks to be effective. Vaccination does not prevent illness if given to someone already exposed to the virus, but may protect against illness from future exposures, so it is not too late to have the vaccine.

If you have any questions please contact 13 HEALTH or your Doctor.

Yours sincerely,

Dr James Smith
Public Health Physician