



**Otago**  
**District Health Board**  
Poari Hauora-ā-rohe ki Ōtāgo



**Southland District**  
**HEALTH BOARD**  
Te Poari Hauora o te Rohe o Murihiku

**To: Staff at Otago and Southland District Health Boards  
External Stakeholders**

**Advisory 12 – 4 June 2009 at 17.00 hr**

**From: District Health Board Incident Controller Leanne Samuel**

**Subject: Influenza A (H1N1)**

**Note:**

**1: This advisory remains current until the situation changes or new information is made available.**

**2: All clinical teams please collect this information and subsequent information in folders. Department heads please print this information and make it visible e.g. on staff notice boards.**

As of 3 June the World Health Organisation reports 19,265 confirmed cases in 66 countries with 115 deaths. This is likely to be the tip of the iceberg. The WHO pandemic phase remains at level 5 (out of 6) and in New Zealand the strategy continues to focus on “keep it out and stamp it out”.

Areas with community level transmission include Mexico, United States, Canada, Japan and Australia. Some countries in South America are now reporting increasing numbers of cases.

Since the 1 June there have been over 300 new confirmed cases reported in Australia, with most of these from Melbourne, Victoria. Given the close links with Australia it is only a matter of time before cases of Influenza A H1N1 begin to occur here.

New Zealand has had 11 confirmed cases – nine at the end of April, one on 31 May and one on 3 June. Public Health South has traced and managed contacts from these cases but so far none has become unwell. The border management strategy, with prompt follow-up of suspected cases and contacts, has worked well over the last six weeks and provided time for health services to review and update their plans.

***There is no evidence of community level transmission of Influenza A H1N1 in New Zealand at present.***

Currently in Otago and Southland, the sentinel general practice surveillance system for influenza-like-illness and numbers of students absent from illness in schools show levels of illness are low and are consistent with previous years for this time of year.

However this is a new virus to which no-one has any immunity. Although the illness appears to be relatively mild, inevitably there will be a spectrum of clinical illness from mild to serious and some cases are likely to be hospitalised.

Once community level transmission becomes established there is likely to be a profound impact on primary care, if large numbers of people become unwell. All health care facilities have been advised to plan for a surge in cases in the coming weeks.

"Staff who are planning to travel overseas should keep informed by watching the [www.safetravel.govt.nz](http://www.safetravel.govt.nz). If you become unwell please don't come to work. Please phone your GP or Healthline for further advice especially if you have recently returned from overseas"

Key websites for further information.

[www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

[www.moh.govt.nz](http://www.moh.govt.nz)