



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



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

Advisory 16: Hospital visiting and healthcare appointments

Novel Influenza A (H1N1) 09

10 July 2009 at 11.30 hrs

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

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

Note:

1: This advisory remains current until the situation changes or new information is made available. All new information is in a larger font.

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.

We are asking all members of the public if they have the symptoms of an influenza-like-illness within three days prior to a healthcare appointment to ring before their appointment to find out whether it is appropriate for them to attend on that date.

Some people may still be asked to attend their appointments – particularly if they have long-term conditions - but measures can be taken to isolate them from others if it is known in advance they are sick.

We are also advising the public that people with influenza-like-illness who need to attend appointments will be asked to wear a mask. Everyone should be frequently washing their hands with soap then drying them thoroughly, or using an alcohol-based hand rub, to help prevent influenza spreading.

At Dunedin Hospital, we are now having arranged visiting only for wards 8C (cancer), 7A (respiratory), the children's ward and the Queen Mary Maternity Centre. The aim is to protect some of our most vulnerable patients. People wanting to visit those wards must report to Patient Enquiries in the main foyer.

The hospital has always restricted visiting to the Intensive Care Unit and Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit to arranged visits.

All visitors to other Dunedin Hospital wards and to other public hospitals across Otago and Southland are being asked to stick strictly to the visiting hours, to reduce the movement of people around the hospital and the opportunities for people to bring influenza-like-illness into the hospital.

Posters have gone up around public hospitals in Otago and Southland about the visiting hours. Posters have also gone up asking visitors to not visit patients if they have a fever, cough, runny nose, sneezing, aches, diarrhoea (the runs) or vomiting.

We are asking people to take these measures so we can do our job, which is to protect vulnerable patients from nasty viruses.

We are also reminding the public that people who think they have the flu should:

- Stay at home
- Wash their hands frequently with soap and dry them thoroughly
- Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues. Dispose of them in a rubbish bin or plastic bag
- Take fluids, rest, and anti-fever medication
- Contact a doctor if they are getting worse – phone first