

Protecting our parishes, missions, and schools

FLU Season Epidemic

Practical Approaches To Minimize The Impacts

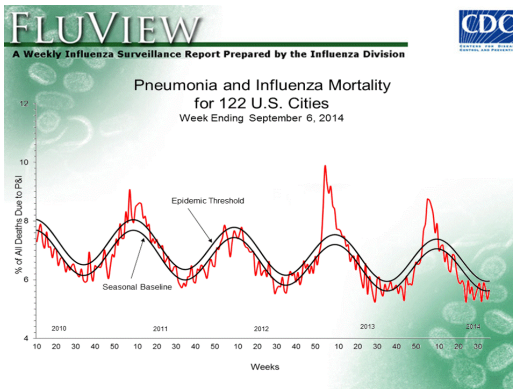
According to the latest Centers for Disease Control (CDC) FluView report, influenza activity remains high and widespread across the nation. (FluView is a weekly influenza surveillance report, from October through mid-May). While activity indicators rose early, influenza-like-illness and the percent of respiratory specimens testing positive for influenza are beginning to show declines, indicators that reflect severity are now rising. It is critical that we take the necessary actions to preclude widespread illness in our Church which can have adverse impacts on the working environment.

Practical Approaches to Address and Prevent Flu Illnesses

- Sick employees should stay at home if they are sick or feeling flu-like symptoms. A sick employee should stay home at least 24 hours after fever is gone according to CDC.
- Each employee should take the necessary steps to communicate your illness to your reporting supervisor per the attendance/leave work policies.
 - For key meetings and critical work-related projects that may require your attendance, consider using telecommunication to participate. Technology advancement in web meetings, telephone conference call-ins, or other conferencing resources may be available to address those staff concerns of being present. **It's important to check with your Supervisor and Human Resources to determine Church policy for telecommunication policy.**
- For Flu prevention, vaccine is the key to increasing your chances of not contacting the flu. It is important to remember:
 - CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses
 - Many of the 24,000 deaths each year from flu are largely in older people and in people with underlying conditions, the flu can make a healthy adult feel very ill and put them out of work for days.
 - At risk population include: people who have certain medical conditions including asthma, diabetes, and chronic lung disease; Pregnant women; People 65 years and older and children under 5 (especially 2 years old). (CDC)



- Many local pharmacies, grocery stores and the Diocese Wellness Program offer Flu Vaccination Programs to you. Vaccines are easy, convenient and accessible for you to participate. (Our goal is 90% participation). For information about the Flu Vaccination: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/flushot.htm>
- Prevention through personal hygiene practices can avoid contact or spread of the virus. We remind you to:
 - Wash hands often using soap and water, antimicrobial soaps, or alcohol based soaps. Wash hands for at least 20 seconds.
 - Use proper control during sneezing or coughing by covering your mouth and nose with tissue/handkerchiefs.
 - Wipe down your work area, phone and mouse/keyboard; kitchen/break room countertops/appliance handles with disinfectants.
- Building Maintenance shall increase cleaning and wiping down common areas such as, but not limited to, door handles, public phones, faucets, elevator buttons and conference/meeting rooms using disinfectants. Lists of all registered disinfectants can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/oppad001/chemregindex.htm>



CDC FLUView Chart: During week 36, 5.7 % of all deaths reported through the 122-Cities Mortality Reporting System were due to pneumonia and flu. This percentage was below the epidemic threshold of 6.0% for week 36.

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