



EMS Advisory Circular # 1

April 30, 2009

Influenza A H1N1 Virus – NPS EMS Guidance and Recommendations

Current Status

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has confirmed human cases of swine influenza in multiple states caused by a novel influenza A H1N1 virus.

Prognosis

The influenza A H1N1 virus situation will remain fluid and NPS recognizes that each local EMS program may have a different approach based upon the number of confirmed or suspected cases within their jurisdiction or geographic area.

General Recommendations to EMS Programs

The following recommendations are provided to the local EMS Program Coordinator and Medical Advisor for consideration when addressing the needs of its EMS provider community during this public health emergency:

- Review local EMS program policies on Infection Control Procedures and, where applicable, include specific language or guidance on influenza A H1N1 virus;
- Conduct trainings for all EMS Personnel on Responding to Patients with influenza-like illnesses (ILI), defined by the CDC as persons presenting with fever and cough and/or sore throat;
- Make influenza A H1N1 virus recommendations and policies available for public distribution;
- Local EMS programs should ensure that all providers, both emergency and non-emergency, have appropriate types of personal protective equipment (PPE) for their personnel;
- Determine if local policies should include enhanced pre-hospital surveillance changes in transport destinations, and/or other considerations;
- Ensure a full working relationship with appropriate local and state health departments.

NPS Emergency Services will continue to provide necessary information and guidance to its EMS programs by identifying trends, sharing best practices and disseminating information.

Train all EMS Personnel on Responding to Patients with Influenza-Like Illnesses

Local EMS Programs should ensure that EMTs and paramedics receive training covering the following topics related to the current public health emergency for H1N1 virus:

- What is influenza A H1N1 virus? What is the current status?
- Case definition of “Influenza-Like Illness” (ILI)
- How EMS personnel should approach the care of ILI patients
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) availability and appropriate use
- Any EMS specific situational guidance recommendations
- Local surveillance and reporting of ILI for Public Health and EMS
- Any changes to local EMS policy for transport versus non-transport related to ILI