

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE: Hastings & Prince Edward Counties Health Unit and Leeds Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit

H1N1 flu outbreak on the wane

Thursday, Nov. 5, 2009 - The outbreak of pandemic H1N1 influenza is clearly on the wane in parts of eastern Ontario, two local medical officers of health announced today.

Data shows that emergency room visits and school absenteeism - both important markers of influenza activity - are returning to normal levels across the region.

"This outbreak actually peaked seven to ten days ago," said Dr. Richard Schabas, medical officer of health for the Hastings & Prince Edward Counties Health Unit. "We've been watching the number come down for a few days now."

"We can expect to see the same pattern across all of southern Ontario over the next week or two," added Schabas. "This is great news for everyone."

"We're confident that this is the real thing," commented Dr. Anne Carter, medical officer of health for the Leeds Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit. "We will see more cases of serious illness but the end is clearly in sight."

The medical officers of health cautioned that the public should expect some serious illness and additional deaths from H1N1. "Severe illnesses persist after the real outbreak has finished," added Carter. "These events are tragic but not unexpected."

Local influenza outbreaks typically last six to eight weeks. Pandemic H1N1 has been active in eastern Ontario for about five weeks.

The medical officers of health continue to recommend H1N1 immunization for members of priority groups. "We're continuing to target priority groups because they can benefit the most from immunization," said Carter. "We expect that there will be plenty of vaccine in a few weeks for anyone who still wants it."

High priority groups who are eligible to receive vaccine are:

- those **under the age of 65** with chronic medical conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, asthma, cancer or kidney disease
- Pregnant women
- Healthy children six months to under five years of age
- Anyone sharing a household with or a care provider of a baby less than six months of age. (Babies less than six months cannot receive the vaccine.)
- Household contacts and care providers of people with serious immune deficiencies.

The two health units are running high priority clinics. For more information, visit The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit website at www.healthunit.org or call 1-800-660-5853 or 613-345-5685.

Suggested Sidebar:

Community Clinic for High Priority Groups

- Nov 5 – Gananoque Kinsmen Club 400 Stone St. – 1pm-7pm
- Nov 6 – Lanark Village - Civitan Club 2144 South Street - 1pm-7pm

Clinics for Pregnant Women Only: Non-adjuvanted vaccine.

- **Brockville**
 - Friday, 6th November - 1 :00 pm to 5:00 pm
 - Brockville General Hospital - 75 Charles St.
- **Smiths Falls**
 - Tuesday, 10th November - 8:30 am to 8:30 pm
 - Perth & Smiths Falls District Hospital - 60 Cornelia St. W.
- **Almonte**
 - Monday, 9th November - 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm
 - Old Fairview Manor - 95 Spring St.

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For more information:

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