

# Human Swine Influenza (H1N1)

## QLD Update

Thursday 18 June 2009



KU is committed to ensuring the health and safety of our children and staff. We are closely monitoring the advice provided by the relevant authorities in relation to H1N1 (Human Swine Influenza) and the impact that may have on KU families, KU services, and the child care sector.

The Federal Government has now announced a new response phase called PROTECT, to manage the outbreak of H1N1. PROTECT recognises that H1N1 Influenza is not as severe as originally envisaged – the disease is mild in most cases, severe in some and moderate overall. **Queensland is moving to the PROTECT phase on Monday 22 June.**

This update outlines the new response requirements in accordance with the PROTECT phase and should be implemented from Monday 22 June. Until then, centres should continue to act in accordance with information provided in previous updates.

### Prevention

Adherence to good health and hygiene practices continued to be considered the best method for preventing the spread of Swine Flu. KU centres always have excellent health and hygiene policies and procedures in place and will continue to utilise these.

In line with specific Government advice in relation to Swine Flu, we are currently encouraging all children, parents and staff to employ the following preventative measures:

- Wash their hands regularly and thoroughly
- Step away from others when they cough or sneeze
- Cough or sneeze into tissues
- Stay away from people who are sick

### Seeking medical attention

In keeping with Government recommendations, KU encourages our staff and families to continue to monitor their health and the health of their children and seek medical advice if you are concerned.

People who are particularly vulnerable to more severe Swine Flu outcomes are encouraged to seek medical attention immediately if they display symptoms. Those people include pregnant women, Indigenous Australians and those with respiratory disease (asthma, COPD), heart disease, diabetes, renal disease, morbid obesity and immunosuppression.

### Reporting

Doctors and hospital staff will continue to report confirmed cases of H1N1 to appropriate authorities if/when necessary. KU staff are no longer required to report.

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### **Quarantine, Exclusion and Centre Closures – Until 26 June**

The Queensland Government is requesting that existing quarantine and exclusion recommendations be observed until Friday 26 June, in line with the end of the Queensland School Term. Those recommendations are as follows:

#### *Children who are well*

There is currently no recommendation to exclude children under school age who are well, unless they have recently returned from a Swine Flu affected area (see list below).

#### *Children who are unwell*

As with all influenzas, it is appropriate to keep children at home if you suspect they are unwell.

In accordance Queensland Government advice, KU asks parents to voluntarily exclude themselves and their children from KU centres in the following situations:

- If you (or your child) are experiencing flu-like symptoms
- If you (or your child) has been in close contact with a confirmed case of the H1N1 virus

#### *Children returning from Swine Flu affected areas (including Victoria)*

The Queensland Government has asked parents of children returning from the following areas to keep their children at home and observe a 7 day exclusion from school and child care centres, following their return to Queensland:

- Victoria, Australia
- USA
- Panama
- Mexico
- Canada
- Japan

KU staff who meet any of these criteria are also requested to stay home until medical advice has been sought or until symptoms have resolved. In keeping with KU policy, medical certificates should accompany some applications for sick leave.

#### *Centre Closures*

In the event of a confirmed case of H1N1 within a KU centre, Queensland Health will instruct that the centre be closed for up to seven days. In the event that this occurs, parents will be advised immediately.

### **Quarantine, Exclusion and Centre Closures – After 26 June**

There are currently no recommendations for the exclusion of children or staff who are well, including those returning from Swine Flu affected areas.

As with all influenzas, it is appropriate to stay home if you suspect they are unwell until medical advice has been sought or symptoms have resolved. In keeping with KU policy, medical certificates should accompany some applications for sick leave.

In confirmed cases of H1N1 Doctors and/or Queensland Health may request exclusion, quarantine or centre closures be observed as appropriate.

### **Sending Children Home**

As is usual practise, if a child becomes unwell whilst at a KU centre, staff are asked to separate them from other children and contact their parents immediately. Parents will be asked to collect the child and may wish to call their GP for further advice.

### **Reassuring Children**

Young children often need reassurance when there is concern about an issue in the community.

Whilst the move to PROTECT phase will provide some reassurance for many adults about the severity of Swine Flu, the scale of community response to date may still cause some

children to worry. KU staff and parents are asked to be conscious of the presence of children when discussing Swine Flu.

**Further Information**

KU will continue to monitor any additional advice or updates issued by Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments on appropriate measures to contain and respond to the virus, and will update staff and parents as required.

More relevant information can be found at:

[Queensland Health](#)

[Education Queensland](#)

[Federal Government - Department of Health and Aging](#)

[Smart Traveller](#) (Up to date information about Swine Flu affected countries)