

Iowa Suffers First H1N1 Flu Death

Earlier this week, the Department of Public Health (IDPH) announced the first Iowa fatality due to novel influenza A (H1N1) virus. Governor Chet Culver also announced on Monday that Iowa has been awarded \$3.4 million from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to support efforts to prepare and respond to an expected resurgence of the H1N1 virus this fall.

The funds awarded to Iowa will help the state prepare for a second wave of illness, including:

- Support for vaccination efforts in local communities to enhance public accessibility.
- Education for the public and health care providers to keep everyone informed as the situation evolves.

- Support for local public health agency preparedness efforts.

All states are receiving funding based upon a formula approved by Congress.

Take Precautions

The IDPH continues to encourage all Iowans to take precautions to avoid contracting the H1N1 virus, which include:

- Wash hands frequently, and always wash hands after coughing or sneezing.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue, or your sleeve or elbow, not into your hands.
- If a person feels ill, they should stay home. Children should not go to daycare or summer camp if they feel ill.

The symptoms of H1N1 are similar to the symptoms of regular seasonal flu and in-

clude fever, cough, sore throat, nasal congestion, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting along with respiratory symptoms. Like seasonal flu, novel flu may be more severe in those who have chronic medical conditions.

The current H1N1 virus spreads the same way as seasonal flu. Flu viruses are spread by an ill person coughing or sneezing. Sometimes people can become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

To date, in Iowa there have been 208 confirmed cases of H1N1, including one death. For more information about the H1N1 flu, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/h1n1/.