

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** State Executives  
AHCA/NCAL Leadership and Members

**FROM:** Janice Zalen, Sr. Dir. of Special Programs

**SUBJECT:** **H1N1 Influenza A Update No. 12**

**DATE:** May 21, 2009

Yesterday's update described new CMS survey guidance related to H1N1 influenza. We want to assure you that AHCA is in communication with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding the statement in that guidance that facilities should have a plan in place for "fit-tested disposable N95 respirators or equivalent."

A less onerous provision in that same guidance suggests that surveyors look for signage emphasizing appropriate respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette and hand hygiene. A poster that meets that requirement may be downloaded from the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper/images/covercgh-sch-view.gif>.

CDC's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (MMWR), which will be released tomorrow, will contain an article that suggests that older people may have antibodies that may help ward off H1N1. Scientists analyzed stored serum samples from over 350 people in various age groups ranging from 6 months to over 60 years of age. Results suggest that adults may have some degree of preexisting cross-reactive antibody to the novel H1N1 flu virus, especially among older adults. However, CDC does not know if such antibodies provide protection against H1N1. A possible explanation to this preexisting immunity in adults is that they may have had previous exposure, either through infection or vaccination, to an influenza A H1N1 virus that was more closely related to the novel H1N1 flu virus than are contemporary seasonal H1N1 strains.

While this may be good news for our residents, CDC cautions that:

- We don't know if the antibodies actually protect against H1N1;
- The study sample was very small—only 350 total; and
- The lab test was not a standard test.

The study summary is available on CDC's website at <http://www.cdc.gov/media/mmwrnews/2009/n090521.htm#1>. The full study will be available tomorrow at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr>.

Finally, today CDC reported 5,764 probable and confirmed cases of H1N1 infection and 9 deaths. The most recent death is a 22 year old in Utah. Reported deaths have occurred in people ranging in age from 22 months old to 57 years old.