

HEALTH AND SAFETY: THE H1N1 FLU VIRUS

“Special Considerations for Persons with Developmental Disabilities”

Considerations for Individuals

- Persons with developmental disabilities (DD) are generally more susceptible to contracting the flu or other viruses due to one or more of the following factors:
 - Have several different staff in and out of their homes daily
 - Live in environments with 2 or more persons
 - Could be less able to communicate flu-like symptoms
 - May have pre-existing health issues that put them at greater risk
 - May have mobility issues that compromise lung function, increasing their risks if they do contact the flu virus
 - May be less able to remove them self from others with flu-like symptoms
 - Could be less able to understand importance of and comply with hygiene measures to prevent the spread of flu viruses
- Schedule and obtain flu and H1N1 immunizations for each individual. Discuss the person's individual needs and risk factors with the medical practitioner.

Considerations for Providers

- Review agency contingency staffing plan to be prepared if staff are ill and unable to cover assigned shifts
- Educate staff to stay home when they have flu-like symptoms to prevent spread of the virus
- Develop and post reminders / memos of flu prevention measures including universal precautions and sanitization procedures
- Encourage individuals and staff to wash hands frequently and thoroughly for 20 seconds

- Encourage staff and individuals to use good hygiene measures including:
 - Coughing/sneezing into tissue or arm
 - Washing hands after sneezing or coughing into tissue, or blowing nose
 - Washing hands before touching eyes, mouth or nose
 - Washing hands before eating
 - Using hand sanitizer correctly when washing hands with soap and water is not possible
 - Frequently clean hard surfaces with disinfecting solution or wipes including door handles, durable medical equipment, speech augmentative devices, medication boxes, water faucets, key boards, etc.
- Ensure necessary protective supplies are in the homes for staff and house-mates to use when one or more persons are ill with flu-like symptoms (tissue, hand sanitizer and soap, masks, gloves, surface sanitizer)
- Consider options to separate person with flu-like symptoms from others in the home
- Ensure any pregnant staff and consumers are aware of added risks of H1N1

Outreach Services

1-866-429-5290 • outreach@fssa.IN.gov • DDRSOutreach.IN.gov

For more reminders and information, please visit DDRSOutreach.IN.gov & www.iidc.indiana.edu/training.



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