

Nurture CIRCLE

FOR ANNE CARLSEN CENTER FAMILIES

November 2009



ACC Nurse Jan Torkelson gives a flu shot to Center employee Sheila Ova. Employees received seasonal flu shots and H1N1 shots this fall.

ACC Vigilant in Fighting H1N1

The Anne Carlsen Center has been working to keep its students, staff and families as healthy as possible, as concerns persist regarding the potential impact of the H1N1 Influenza virus.

“(The parents’ and guardians’) patience and understanding have

been extremely helpful to staff as we work to protect our students and clients from the very serious threat presented by H1N1,” says Dr. Myra Quanrud, the ACC Medical Director.

Center students have received the

H1N1 vaccination, with a few exceptions in cases where the parents/guardians did not give consent. Students under the age of 10 received two doses. A large number of staff members received the vaccination.

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Since September 22, the Center has implemented a number of protective measures, such as restricting student/client outings, limiting significantly the number and kinds of visitors to campus, and screening the health of those allowed to visit. Employees who become ill are, as part of the measures, required to stay home for seven days.

Despite this comprehensive preemptive effort, H1N1 did eventually reach the Center campus. And on November 9, parents and guardians were notified that ACC had two confirmed cases of H1N1 and 12 presumed. No students or clients has been critically ill with the virus. They have responded well to the anti-viral treatments, and have been regaining their strength day by day. Many who became ill have completely recovered and resumed their normal routines.

In light of these improvements, ACC is resuming its policy of allowing immediate family members to visit their child. Nursing staff will, as before, give each person a health screening, upon arrival on campus.

If you plan on visiting the Center this Thanksgiving, there will be certain age-specific restrictions, as part of the Center's effort to protect students and staff. If you have any children five years old and younger, those children will not be allowed to visit the living areas (*please note: this does not just apply to Thanksgiving ... younger children will not be allowed in the living areas until our H1N1-related restrictions are lifted*). When dining on campus this Thanksgiving holiday, if you have a family member age five or younger, you

are asked to enjoy your meal in the Sunroom.

We realize that some students/clients will be spending the Thanksgiving holiday at home. If during that visit, your child becomes ill, he/she must stay home for 7-10 days, before being allowed to return to the Center. This, again, is another step that will help protect the individuals served by ACC, many of whom are medically fragile.

Holiday visits with family typically entail trips to restaurants, stores and residences. Parents and guardians are asked to avoid taking their child to heavily crowded places, where the risk of contracting a virus, such as H1N1, is greater.

"As the situation with H1N1 evolves, we ask for (parents' and guardians') continued cooperation and patience," says ACC Interim CEO Eric Monson. "The guidelines and recommendations we issue may change over time, as we learn more about this new virus and its potential impact."

Keep in mind the following tips to help protect you and your family from H1N1 and other viruses:

- Avoid contact with ill persons.
- When you cough or sneeze, cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or your sleeve (if you do not have a tissue). Throw used tissues into the garbage.
- After you cough or sneeze, wash your hands with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Wash your hands often. Washing your hands and the hands of children/young adults often will help protect you from germs.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Practice good health habits. Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food. Keep your immune system healthy!
- Keep ill children at home.
- You are encouraged to obtain the seasonal influenza vaccine and H1N1 Influenza vaccine.

There are a variety of H1N1 resources and updates available on the Center's Web site, www.annecenter.org. The Web site is updated frequently.

"The parents and guardians of our students and clients have been terrific ... very helpful," says Bette Johnson, ACC's Director of Nursing Services. "The Anne Carlsen Center is blessed in so many ways. The dedication and cooperation of ACC families is very much a part of that."