

# SHEFFIELD LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE

# NEWSFLASH

## SWINE FLU

### ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR GPs

The LMC has been asked to distribute the following information on behalf of the South Yorkshire Health Protection Unit (SYHPU). This information will continue to be updated frequently, and practices should look out for notifications from NHS Sheffield. Further information is available from the SYHPU on (0114) 242 8850 or [syhpuoc@hpa.org.uk](mailto:syhpuoc@hpa.org.uk). The key messages are as follows:

- The current WHO alert level is level 5. This means we are preparing for a pandemic but we do not yet have one.
- People with flu are usually infectious for 4 to 7 days, depending on symptoms.
- Suspected cases must meet all 3 conditions:
  - Fever (38 degrees or more)
  - Flu symptoms
  - Travel to an affected area within 7 days of onset
- Patients with suspected swine flu should stay at home until they have been assessed.
- GPs visiting patients with suspected swine flu need to wear protective clothing - a mask (eg surgical mask), gloves and apron. By the end of Friday 1 May, all Sheffield GP practices should have received a supply of protective clothing. Any practices not receiving a supply should contact NHS Sheffield on (0114) 3051067 or [fluadvice@sheffieldpct.nhs.uk](mailto:fluadvice@sheffieldpct.nhs.uk).
- Suspected cases of swine flu **must** be reported to SYHPU – (0114) 2428850 - otherwise the swabs will not be processed and tested for swine flu by the specialist HPA lab in Colindale. Patient identifiable information should **not** be sent via email.

#### SWAB TESTING

- Swabbing should **only be** conducted on patients who are possible cases according to the Health Protection Agency (HPA) definition, available on their website at: [http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb\\_C/1240732818131?p=1240812234677](http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1240732818131?p=1240812234677). There are logistical problems regarding the supply and processing of viral swabs - **please do not swab people outside the guidelines**.
- Two swabs are required– one nasal, one throat. If you only have one swab, a throat swab is preferable to a nasal swab.
- Viral swabs and transport medium are now available from the GP Collaborative - (0114) 3051414 - rather than the laboratory. They will be **supplied only to patients meeting the HPA guidelines**, and in kits containing protective clothing and advice for swab taking and infection control.

#### TAMIFLU

- Tamiflu is only for use on patients who are possible cases according to the HPA definition.
- The HPA/HPU will advise on whom to test and who needs Tamiflu according to the national guidance. They have access to Tamiflu and/or know where to get it from. Currently the Wicker Chemist is holding the Sheffield HPA stock.
- **IMPORTANT: Tamiflu capsules may be broken (under licence) in an emergency for use in children but must be given in the correct dosage according to weight.** Powder can be mixed with suitable nice tasting stuff (no more than a teaspoonful). Full instructions are in the Statement of Product Characteristics.

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