




MEMORANDUM

TO: Hospitals, Ambulatory and Community Clinics, Skilled Nursing and Other Long-Term Care Facilities, Other Licensed Health Care Facilities, Emergency Medical Service Providers

FROM: William B. Walker, M.D., Health Officer 

DATE: March 28, 2017

SUBJECT: End of Influenza Season for Influenza Vaccination/Masking Order

I appreciate your help and support in protecting the residents of Contra Costa County. As defined by the influenza vaccination/masking order (cchealth.org/flu/pdf/2012-0827-hcw-memo.pdf), the influenza season will end on March 31 and will resume on November 1, 2017.

California surveillance data indicate that the predominant strains during the 2016-2017 influenza season were ones matched by the seasonal vaccine. Regional data show a rapid increase in influenza disease activity in December, which was an earlier arrival compared to past influenza seasons. Routinely vaccinating your patients and staff as soon as influenza vaccine is available can help protect them when disease activity peaks early in the season.

Influenza disease can spread quickly through a long-term care facility (LTCF), causing severe illness among residents and significant disruption to facility operations. Some LTCF patients with influenza illness may require hospitalization. As recommended in the January 2017 All Facilities Letter (<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/facilities/Documents/LNC-AFL-17-02.pdf>), LTCFs should develop plans to implement droplet precautions if necessary for returning patients hospitalized with influenza who are now clinically ready for discharge.

To help mitigate outbreaks, both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) recommend the prompt initiation of antiviral chemoprophylaxis as soon as an influenza outbreak is confirmed in a LTCF. Skilled nursing facilities and other LTCFs with standing orders for antiviral chemoprophylaxis for eligible patients are able to quickly respond and prevent more illness and disruption. This recommendation, along with others, is included in an influenza outbreak checklist for facilities (cchealth.org/flu).

For any additional questions, please contact our Communicable Disease Programs, Public Health Division, Contra Costa Health Services at (925) 313-6740.

cc: Board of Supervisors
David Twa

