

IHN FLU PROCEDURES

By MerryBeth McKee, IHN Director of Operations

In the continued health interests of our guests, volunteers, and staff, we're repeating the precautions, published in the October InterCoordinator, for preventing the spread of the influenza virus and other common viral infections:

Promote regular hand washing among guests, staff and volunteers, providing hand soap in the bathrooms and hand sanitizer and bleach wipes throughout the building. Show children proper hand washing techniques that include rubbing of hands with soap under warm water for at least 30 seconds (or the Happy Birthday song) before thoroughly rinsing. Be sure to post signs reminding everyone to wash their hands, especially children coming from school or day care.

Clean and disinfect communal surfaces daily. This includes doorknobs, appliance handles, computer keyboards, light switches, tables, remote controls, etc.

Disinfect communal toys and books daily during the flu "high season." Putting certain items away during this time may be a good idea to eliminate extreme volunteer labor.

Post flyers in key areas around the building indicating "How to Protect Yourself and Others" from the flu.

If a guest is experiencing any flu-like symptoms (fever, fatigue, sore throat, coughing, body aches or headaches) please advise them to limit the spread of the infectious droplets by:

1. Cough or sneeze into their elbow. Droplets expel up to 3 feet, but your elbow is able to wrap around, containing the droplets on your sleeve. Using your hand just moves the droplets onto the next thing you touch.
2. Wash clothes/bedding on the hot setting in both the washer and dryer.
3. Carry a plastic bag with them if they are using tissues. After blowing their nose, they should immediately deposit the used tissue in the bag. Also, when finished sneezing, they should wash or sanitize their hands before touching anything others would touch.

It is important to notify the Day Center if any guest experiences flu-like symptoms. Proper procedures will be followed in determining whether or not the guest and/or family needs to be quarantined. Face masks will be made available to guests with severe coughing.

All guests (age appropriate) and staff will be given the H1N1 flu vaccine by MedVan physicians when it becomes available.