



YMCA

We build strong kids,
strong families, strong communities.

June 29, 2009

COMMUNICATION BULLETIN

To: Parents

From: Jim Janzen, Chief Executive Officer

Re: Human Infections – H1N1 Virus

The Community Health Services Departments across Southwestern Ontario are requesting our assistance in monitoring absenteeism within our recreational day camp programs throughout the summer. Surveillance of recreational day camp absenteeism is a valuable tool for early detection of respiratory illnesses such as influenza in our communities. The Surveillance Program involves identifying and notifying the Community Health Services department when the camp has an absentee rate of 10% or greater on any given day due to flu-like illness such as fever, cough, sore throat, weaknesses, fatigue, muscle aches, stuffy/runny nose or headache.

In response to the surveillance program the YMCA has adopted the following initiatives for all campers, staff and volunteers:

1. Parents/Guardians of campers will immediately inform camp management if any camper currently has or has had a flu-like illness in the 7 days prior to arrival. **Camp Management, in consultation with the parent/guardian, will determine if it is in the best interest of the camper and the camp for the camper to participate.**
2. Persons who currently have or had flu-like symptoms in the previous 7 days should not attend camp until they have been symptom-free for 24 hours.
3. Parents/Guardians of campers not attending camp as scheduled are asked to immediately advise camp management of their absence – in doing so please indicate if the absence is related to the following symptoms: **fever, cough, sore throat, weakness/fatigue, muscle aches, stuffy/runny nose, headache.** *Parents/Guardians are asked to keep camp management informed of their child's on-going medical condition.*
4. Campers who develop flu-like symptoms while at camp will be separated from the general population and cared for by a designated YMCA staff member until they can be safely

YMCA of Sarnia-Lambton

YMCA of Chatham-Kent

Association Services

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picked up by a parent/guardian or taken for medical care if necessary. *Parents/Guardians are asked to keep camp management informed of their child's on-going medical condition.*

5. YMCA camp management will maintain a log of absenteeism; on any given day where there is evidence of a spike in illness due to flu-like symptoms of greater than 10% the numbers will be reported to the respective Community Health Departments as per the surveillance request; parents of children enrolled in the program will also be advised.
6. YMCA camp management has also put a process in place to ensure that camp staff and volunteers who have or had flu-like symptoms are separated from the general population and do not return to work until they have been symptom-free for 24 hours.
7. 'Active Screening' of all camp attendees, staff and volunteers will be implemented should the camp experience a spike in absenteeism. Active Screening involves a brief discussion with the parent/guardian on the general state of health of their child before leaving them with the camp for the day.

All YMCA Day-Camp Staff have received instruction on how to recognize the symptoms of ill health as well as the general infection control recommendations issued through the Community Health Services Department(s). Instruction with campers on the importance of covering their cough or sneeze and use of good hand hygiene had been adopted into all camps programs. Note: The YMCA does have available 'Alcohol based Hand Sanitizers' that contain minimum 70% alcohol content. These products may be used occasionally for in between regular hand washes or when soap and water is not available.

In response to the World Health Organization's announcement of a level 5 pandemic in April, the YMCAs of Southwestern Ontario activated a Pandemic Coordinating Committee to monitor and respond to the potential health risks to our members, participants, volunteers and staff. These activities include on-going communication and monitoring of staff and volunteer attendance; an enhanced cleaning and sanitization of workstations, equipment and general public access points throughout our facilities.

The YMCA is actively monitoring Health Alerts issued from the World Health Organizations and local Community Health Agencies on an ongoing basis. Our commitment is to provide a healthy, safe and fun summer for all children participating in one of our summer camp programs.

We appreciate your co-operation in helping us make your child's summer a healthy, safe experience.

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