



RoodlaneMedical

## Swine Flu – Updated Advice to Clients

### 28 April 2009

Two cases of H1N1 Influenza type A "swine flu" have been confirmed in Scotland. As advised in our bulletin yesterday, human to human transmission is now clearly demonstrated and the WHO has raised its pandemic alert level to level 4. It is likely that this will increase to level 5 as more cases emerge over the coming days.

The UK is well prepared for a national flu epidemic and there are upwards of 33 million individual doses of antiviral medication. Data from cases to date suggest that the virus is susceptible to early treatment.

The high case fatality seen in Mexico may be due to significant under reporting of community cases and there is speculation that there may be many thousands of unreported cases. Hospital cases are necessarily more ill than community cases and this may have biased the Mexican data.

The signs to date are that the current A H1/N1 strain is more serious than the normal seasonal flu but probably less severe than previous pandemic strains such as the 1968 Hong Kong strain and the 1918 "Spanish Flu".

#### **Our advice is that:**

- Staff returning from areas in which flu has been reported spend 1 week on home quarantine (this means returning from a City in which there have been significant numbers of cases)
- Individuals returning from areas with cases who develop flu like symptoms should stay at home and should contact their usual doctor *by telephone* and they will be assessed and issued with antiviral medication if appropriate
- The foreign office now advises against non-essential travel to Mexico
- The best way to combat transmission of flu virus is scrupulous hand hygiene - this means washing your hands or using a proprietary antiviral hand cleanser after touching hard surfaces such as door handles and "hot desks" / travelling by tube

If you require further information then please contact Hannah Hawkins at Roodlane Medical ([hannah.hawkins@roodlane.co.uk](mailto:hannah.hawkins@roodlane.co.uk)).