



County of Erie

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COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Commissioner of Health

HEALTH ALERT PRIORITY #274

July 12, 2010

Erie County K-12 School Absenteeism Reporting for the 2010-2011 School Year in Erie County

Please distribute to School Superintendents, School Principals, Directors of Facilities and Maintenance, and other appropriate school personnel.

Summary

- The Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) will be continuing school absenteeism surveillance for the 2010-2011 school year.
- ECDOH requests that all districts/schools continue reporting school absenteeism numbers when school resumes for the Fall 2010 semester.

Background

The Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) began its school absenteeism reporting program in the spring semester of the 2009-2010 school year in response to concerns about H1N1 influenza. Nearly 100% of school districts participated in the school absenteeism reporting program during the past school year. School districts' cooperation and reporting efforts generated comprehensive, real-time illness surveillance data that was used to inform the department's prevention and intervention efforts during the H1N1 pandemic response.

Though the H1N1 influenza pandemic has waned in Erie County, the ECDOH surveillance activities will continue. We must remain vigilant to identify a resurgence of H1N1 influenza or other communicable diseases of public health importance. A comprehensive and robust surveillance system helps assure prompt identification of and response to communicable disease outbreaks in Erie County. We cannot predict what the next public health emergency will be or when it will occur, but school absenteeism reporting may provide an early warning signal. Data gathered in the school system is one indicator of the prevalence of communicable disease in our community at large.

School districts are encouraged to resume school absenteeism reporting when classes resume for the 2010-2011 school year. We will no longer be requesting specific influenza-like illness (ILI) absenteeism, but rather total numbers of students and faculty absent or sent home due to illness.

Absenteeism Reporting Process

The ECDOH Epidemiology and Surveillance Program is continuing its school surveillance program for the 2010-2011 school year. Please see the attached data collection tools and instructions.

- We request that all districts/schools continue or begin collecting school absenteeism numbers, as well as numbers of students/faculty sent home due to illness for the upcoming school year.
- Please continue to report surveillance information to ECDOH Epidemiology Program as early as possible each day.
- We will continue to evaluate the active surveillance program on a local level and will provide you with updated information as it becomes available.

Additional information

For any additional questions or concerns, please call the Epidemiology and Surveillance Program at 716-858-7697.

The ECDOH Health Alert & Advisory System is an e-mail notification system designed to alert community partners about important health related information. **You can sign up to receive alerts & advisories at www.erie.gov/health/services/health_professionals.asp.**

Health Category Definitions:

Health Alert FLASH: conveys the highest level of importance due to a large-scale, catastrophic public health emergency; warrants immediate action or attention

Health Alert Priority: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention to a health problem or situation

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary

The Erie County Department of Health does not provide medical advice. The information provided herein and on the Erie County Department of Health website is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your personal physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition or issue. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of the content found on the Erie County Department of Health website or this correspondence.

Individual School Surveillance

School District: _____
 School Name: _____
 Principal Name: _____
 Contact Person: _____
 Contact Phone Number: _____

School Enrollment: _____
 Number of Faculty & Staff: _____
 School Nurse: _____
 School Nurse Phone: _____

Report Date	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /
Students											
# Absent											
# Sent home with illness											
Faculty & Staff											
# Absent											
# Went home with illness											

Please note unusual illness activity in your school below:

Describe the Unusual Activity: _____

 Describe the Unusual Activity: _____

Please forward report to your School District Office at: _____

School District Surveillance