

## Information Sheet 1: Management of Flu

We are sending this sheet to people in our Bayside Community Options community to make sure everyone has the same information and we will post out communications to everyone on an ongoing basis if this needed at a later stage.

At the time of writing this information sheet there are no confirmed cases of Swine Flu in Australia.

For both seasonal and swine flu, the best way to protect yourself and others is to:

- stay at home when you are sick
- wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use an alcohol base hand gel
- wash your hands prior to touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- when coughing or sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with disposable tissues which should be disposed of immediately
- don't share items such as cigarettes, glasses or cups, lipstick, toys or anything which could be contaminated with respiratory secretions
- maintain at least one metre distance from people who have flu-like symptoms such as coughing or sneezing
- consult your doctor if you have a cough and fever and follow their instructions, including taking medicine as prescribed
- if attending a medical practice or hospital Emergency Department, telephone beforehand so that they can arrange for you to be seen away from other people

**The most important infection control measure is good hand washing practices.** For this reason you may notice that our Support Workers will be making more use of gloves and perhaps aprons or masks depending on the task they are undertaking in your home. This will assist their good health as well as yours. Please practice good hand washing practices yourself and it would be appreciated if you could assist us and any visitors to your home by providing liquid soap in a bottle and a roll of paper towel.

Many people do not wash their hands thoroughly. This is the correct way to do it –



Symptoms of swine flu are similar to those of seasonal influenza, including:

- fever
- cough
- sore throat
- body aches
- headache
- chills
- fatigue

Some people have also reported diarrhoea and vomiting associated with swine flu. Like seasonal flu, swine flu in humans can vary in severity from mild to severe.

While you are unwell with any form of flu you should remain at home and avoid going out in public. We always give the same advice to our staff which means that, as we enter the winter months and the usual flu season, there may be some disruption to our staff rostering and our services. We will always try to provide basic services.

You have probably heard the word pandemic being used on the television and radio. A pandemic is a sudden outbreak that becomes very widespread and affects a whole region, a continent or the world. Again, at the time of writing this information sheet, there are no confirmed cases of Swine Flu in Australia.

However it is sensible to make some plans.

Some suggestions the Department of Health and Aging is making are –

- Have plans in place if you and your family have to stay at home for a week or more. Talk calmly to your family and friends about this.
- If you live alone, are a single parent of young children or are the only person caring for a frail or disabled person, think of some one you could call upon for help if you become very ill with the flu. Discuss with the person what help you might need and how that could best be provided
- Think of someone you could call on to care for your children if their school or day care centre were to close but you still had to go to work. Discuss this with them.
- Have a telephone network for you and the people who live close by
- Put the phone number of your family doctor in a prominent place
- Think of some one who could help you with food or other supplies if you or your family were sick and could not leave the house
- Teach children and grand children about hand washing and cough etiquette
- Think of the supplies you might need

Keep this information sheet and, for any further information and assistance, please ring Bayside Community Options on 32691915 or 0408691929. We are your companions in the good times and any time of concern or need.

Our next information sheet will advise you what to do if you get sick with flu this season.