



## ARRANGEMENTS FOR SCHOOLS REGARDING INFLUENZA H1N1 (HUMAN SWINE FLU)

4 June 2009

Dear Parents

As you may be aware, a decision has been made at a national level to introduce a range of additional measures to reduce the spread of Influenza H1N1 09 (Human Swine Flu). These measures are a response to the fact that Australia has moved from the Pandemic Influenza phase **Delay** to the current phase **Contain**. The key Government objective of the **Contain** phase is to limit the spread of the virus.

### **Students returning from overseas**

Among these measures is an agreement that all States and Territories **move to excluding, for a seven-day period from schools**, students who are returning or arriving from the following overseas countries: Mexico, United States of America, Canada, Panama and Japan. This list can be found on the Department of Health and Ageing website: [www.healthemergency.gov.au](http://www.healthemergency.gov.au) and is reviewed regularly in light of the current situation. In Queensland we are referring to this period as a seven-day timeout period.

The seven-day timeout period allows time for the illness to appear if the student has acquired the illness. The seven-day timeout period is only considered at this stage necessary for primary and secondary schools. This is because outbreaks overseas have only been reported in school settings to date.

If you have a child who has returned or is to return from one of the affected areas, could you please advise the school and ensure that your child remains at home for seven days even if they do not have symptoms. The seven days includes weekends and public holidays. If your child becomes unwell, please seek immediate medical advice from your general practitioner.

This seven-day timeout period from school following travel in a country of concern will aid in slowing the spread of the disease and limit the possibility of school closure due to an outbreak in the school.

There will be no school supervision provided to children on the seven-day timeout.

### **Students returning from Victoria face seven-days time-out**

To minimise the spread of H1N1 Influenza A - or Human Swine Influenza - school students and children in early childhood education and care centres coming to Queensland from Victoria are now required to observe a seven-day time-out period before entering a Queensland school or care.



The expansion of the seven-day time-out period is designed to help protect Queensland students against the spread of Human Swine Influenza.

Students and young children affected by the seven-day time-out period are asked to stay home and limit contact with others. This includes children attending schools, childcare centres and kindergartens.

The decision to expand the seven-day time-out to include Victoria has been made following advice from the Commonwealth Government regarding the escalation of Human Swine Influenza in that state.

### **Event of school closure**

In the event of a confirmed case of Influenza H1N1 (Human Swine Flu) in a student attending Sheldon College, the school will be closed for up to seven days.

During a school closure – or if your child is involved in a seven-day timeout period – every attempt will be made to provide schoolwork. This may be placed on the school website, emailed or mailed home. Parents and students will be asked to remain connected to school via the internet and to keep in contact with teachers through email where possible.

Parents can assist the College to manage the current situation in the following ways:

- Provide the school with current contact details including current address, telephone number, mobile phone number and email address and any other information you may consider to be relevant.
- Continue to follow standard good hygiene practices such as covering nose and mouth if sneezing or coughing and regular hand-washing.
- Be diligent in observing your family's health and seek medical assistance where uncertain.
- Ensure children avoid major gatherings e.g. sporting events and shopping centres during the seven-day timeout period or school closure.

Queensland Health continues to closely monitor this situation and should it change, the College community will be advised immediately. Please stay informed by paying attention to media reports. Updates will be available on the Department of Education and Training website at [www.deta.qld.gov.au](http://www.deta.qld.gov.au)

If you have any questions about symptoms or illness you can call 13HEALTH (13432584) 24 hours a day, seven days a week or contact your regular health practitioner.

Yours sincerely

Dr Lyn Bishop  
**Principal**

