



THE ADMINISTRATION OF NORFOLK ISLAND

MEDIA RELEASE

Human Swine Influenza update

The Norfolk Island Government Human Swine Influenza Task Force continues to monitor the situation to ensure that every available measure is in place to protect the Norfolk Island community against any threat from Human Swine Influenza, also known as Influenza A (H1N1) 09.

The Task Force recently distributed to all mailboxes a guide for community members on protection measures against influenza and has continued to publish updated information in local newspapers and on Radio Norfolk. All incoming passengers arriving by air or sea continue to be provided with a notice setting out what steps to take if they have 'flu-like symptoms.

While there have been swine flu cases detected in many parts of Australia, to date there are no suspected or confirmed cases in Norfolk Island. However, everyone should be alert to the symptoms, which are similar to those of the regular 'flu including fever, cough, sore throat, aching body, headache, chills, fatigue, diarrhoea and vomiting. Anyone experiencing these symptoms should contact the Norfolk Island Hospital **by telephone** on 22091 for further advice. **People with symptoms are requested not to go straight to the hospital as this could spread the infection to other persons.**

The Task Force has ensured that extra supplies of the antiviral drugs Tamiflu and Relenza have been obtained by the hospital, together with additional face masks. These items will be available only on prescription from a registered medical officer. Such prescriptions will be limited at present to patients actually diagnosed with flu-like symptoms.

As previously announced, the Administrator has authorised the Minister for Health or Government Medical Officer to take those measures and actions that they have reasonable grounds to believe are necessary and reasonable in the circumstances to prevent the introduction into and spread of Human Swine Influenza in Norfolk Island. These measures could include:

- disease surveillance and reporting systems at Norfolk Island's airport;
- taking appropriate quarantine measures if suspected cases of the disease are identified at the airport; and
- requiring disinfection measures on aircraft and ships.

These authorisations have resulted in written directions being issued to the relevant Norfolk Island health, quarantine and customs authorities by the Minister for Tourism and Health to ensure that they have the powers necessary to act quickly in an emergency to prevent the introduction and spread of Human Swine Influenza in Norfolk Island.

A range of protocols and policies have been put in place to deal with any possible outbreak of swine 'flu in Norfolk Island, which are in compliance with the recommendations of Australian health authorities. The Norfolk Island Central School is currently applying the policy recommended by the New South Wales Department of Education and Training. This means that students who have travelled to an area where there have been confirmed cases of swine 'flu are being asked to remain in voluntary quarantine for a period of seven days after their return to Norfolk Island.

The Task Force has identified potential areas for quarantining of any person with suspected or confirmed influenza A (H1N1) should this become necessary in future. The Norfolk Island Human Swine Influenza Task Force thanks the community for its cooperation and understanding of the measures taken to reduce the risk of any outbreak of swine flu in Norfolk Island.

Further information on the Human Swine Flu is available on the Australian Government's national influenza hotline on ph 08- 84028833 which Norfolk Island residents can call free of charge, with regular information updates available on the health emergency website at www.healthemergency.gov.au.

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