



## Epidemiology Unit

### Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition

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EPID/34/XB/2008

17<sup>th</sup> June 2009

Director/Medical Superintendent  
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### **Response to an Imminent Novel Influenza A/H1N1 Outbreak in the Country**

The first confirmed case of novel influenza A/H1N1 in the country was reported this evening from the Infectious Disease Hospital (IDH). The patient is a 8 year old boy who is an Australian citizen who had arrived in the country from Australia on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2009 to attend a family function. His sister had been detected as a suspected case in Singapore when they arrived at the airport for transit on their way to Colombo. She was later identified as a confirmed case by the Singapore health authorities.

In the face of this development, preparedness activities on influenza pandemic preparedness should be strengthened in the country mainly targeting the sentinel hospitals identified under the avian/pandemic influenza preparedness project.

**Therefore please ensure that the isolation facility of your institution is geared to take in these suspected patients at any given time. These units should be equipped with necessary furniture to house the patients and should have mandatory patient care items and medicine for clinical management of these patients. Please ensure that staff indicated for this facility (medical officers, nursing officers as well as minor staff) are well updated with the principles of case management, isolation, infection control and proper waste disposal indicated in a possible influenza pandemic situation (guidelines on these subjects are specified in the circulars No.02-164/2005 'Guidelines for the Preparedness and Response to an Avian Influenza Pandemic Threat' dated 30/11/2005 and No. 01-19/2006 'Joint Circular on Guidelines on Collection and Transport of Specimens' dated 15/03/2006). Please make arrangements to update your stocks of the indicated anti viral drug 'Oseltamivir' and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) through the Medical Supplies Division.**

Please make arrangements to involve the relevant clinicians and your infection control team for the activity and the regional epidemiologist of your district would be available to provide you with necessary instructions and advice. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further clarifications regarding the issue. Above circulars and guidelines are available at the Epidemiology Unit website [www.epid.gov.lk](http://www.epid.gov.lk)

Thank you,

**Dr Paba Palihawadana**  
**Chief Epidemiologist**  
**Epidemiology Unit**

CC Provincial Director of Health Services  
Regional Director of Health Services  
Regional Epidemiologist