

PANDEMIC INFLUENZA – HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES

All staff should be reminded to practice good personal hygiene – use a disposable tissue to control coughs/sneezes, dispose of it appropriately and wash hands before eating, drinking etc. In addition:

- Advise staff to stay at home if they are ill with flu-like symptoms.
- Send home any staff who are displaying flu-like signs/symptoms

The health and safety response within workplaces should be based on appropriate risk assessment and proportionate to the pandemic situation – whilst there will be a need to keep this under review the following provides some useful general guidance.

Public Information Posters

Consideration should be given to placing appropriate information posters in public and staff areas within workplaces. The content of posters should be consistent with government health department guidance. The information should reinforce the *Catch it, Bin it, Kill it* theme along with general information on good personal hygiene including hand washing. Posters and other materials are available to download from:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publichealth/Flu/Swineflu/DH_098802 .

Handwashing

For premises that have adequate access to toilet facilities – soap and water will suffice. In locations where toilet facilities are inadequate then consideration may need to be given to providing other means of hand cleansing – this will include dispenser type hand sanitisers.

Face Masks

The number of people in public places who are displaying symptoms is likely to be limited. Therefore it should not be necessary for staff to wear masks when in contact with the general public.

Cleaning and Bins

Cleaning schedules should be reviewed and damp rather than dry dusting used. Particular attention should be paid to the cleaning of hard surfaces. It would seem reasonable that bins used to receive discarded soiled tissues should have plastic liners inserted in them.

Susceptible Individuals

There will be staff employed who are likely to be more at risk if they catch swine flu – these include those with certain chronic diseases and pregnancy. Given that the recommendation is that those with flu like symptoms should self-isolate and not be at work - there is no need to specifically identify individuals who are in any of the more at risk categories.



Sources of further advice:

www.nidirect.gov.uk

www.publichealth.hscni.net

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publichealth/Flu/Swineflu/DH_098802

www.nicsohs.gov.uk

Northern Ireland Helpline for Swine Flu

Tel: 0800 0514 142
