

MH 34: 85

29 April 2009

Licensees of Medical / Dental Clinics  
Nursing Homes, Inpatient Hospices, Chronic Sick Hospitals, Psychiatric Rehabilitation Homes, Group Home for the Ex-mentally Ill  
Day Rehabilitation Centres, Dementia Day Care Centres, Psychiatric Rehabilitation Centres and Hospice Day Care  
Home Healthcare Services (Home Medical, Home Nursing and Home Hospice)

**MOH CIRCULAR 28/2009  
SECTOR-SPECIFIC ADVISORIES ON SWINE INFLUENZA A FOR PRIMARY AND INTERMEDIATE / LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES**

Following MOH circular 19/2009 dated 28 Apr 09 informing all medical practitioners and licensees of healthcare establishment of the upgrade of our DORSCON alert status from GREEN to YELLOW, MOH has worked with relevant stakeholders to provide sector-specific advisories.

**Communication Platform for Healthcare Professionals**

2 As we prepare ourselves for a possible outbreak, MOH will do our best to provide timely and accurate information. MOH will be consolidating all relevant information on swine influenza on MOH website ([www.moh.gov.sg](http://www.moh.gov.sg)). In addition, professional circulars and directives for healthcare professionals will be posted on Health Professional Portal (HPP, <http://www.hpp.moh.gov.sg>), which is accessible to doctors, nurses, dentists and pharmacists. We urge all medical practitioners to subscribe to MedAlert in order to be alerted to the latest circular. We are working on extending the MedAlert to other healthcare professionals.

3 In addition, MOH have worked with SMA and CFPS to establish various communication channels. A summary of these communication channels and useful telephone numbers is attached as Annex A for easy reference. The Ministry of Health should also be **notified immediately** of suspected cases. Please contact the Communicable Diseases Division at 98171463 (available 24 hours).

**GP Clinics and Other Medical / Dental Clinics**

4 MOH has worked with CFPS and SMA on an advisory for GPs and other medical clinics for the current DORSCON alert status. Please refer to Annex B for the details.

5 MOH has also worked with SMA to provide mask-fitting for GPs. GPs who have not earlier done mask-fitting, please contact SMA for further information.

6 In addition, MOH will jointly organize a **GP Forum on 2 May 2009 (Sat) at 2:30pm at MOH Auditorium** to provide an update on the swine flu situation. No pre-registration is necessary and lunch will be provided from 1:00pm.

### **Nursing Homes, Inpatient Hospice and other Long-Term Institutional Care Facilities**

7 MOH has also worked with relevant stakeholders for an advisory for nursing homes, inpatient hospice and other long-term institutional care facilities. This is attached as Annex C.

### **Day Rehabilitation Centres, Dementia Day Care, Other Medical Day Care Facilities and Home Health Care Services**

8 Day care facilities e.g. day rehabilitation centres and home health care services should refer to the advisory attached as Annex D.

### **Optimal Preparedness**

9 MOH is committed to ensuring that all healthcare facilities are optimally prepared for swine influenza. Please bring this circular to the attention to all staff in your facility. MOH will be conducting suitable audits to ensure that healthcare facilities comply with relevant infection control guidelines.

10 For further clarifications of this circular, please email us at [moh\\_info@moh.gov.sg](mailto:moh_info@moh.gov.sg)



PROF K SATKU  
DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL SERVICES

cc CEOs, Singhealth and NHG Polyclinics  
President, Singapore Medical Association  
President, College of Family Physicians, Singapore  
CEO, Health Promotion Board  
CEO, Health Science Authority  
Chief Medical Corps, MINDEF

## Summary of information channels & useful contact numbers

MOH Information platform and useful contact numbers	
Mode	Remarks
MOH website: <a href="http://www.moh.gov.sg">www.moh.gov.sg</a>	Updated information for all
Health Professional Portal (HPP): <a href="http://www.hpp.moh.gov.sg">www.hpp.moh.gov.sg</a>	Professional circulars and directives for healthcare professionals. To subscribe and update contact details for MedAlert**
SMA website: <a href="http://www.sma.org.sg">www.sma.org.sg</a>	For information on Pandemic Flu Guide for clinics
Email: <a href="mailto:MOH_conversations@moh.gov.sg">MOH_conversations@moh.gov.sg</a>	For general feedback from GPs
Hotline for Communicable Disease Division, MOH: <b>98171463</b>	For immediate notification of suspected case of Swine Influenza
Dedicated Ambulance Service (24hrs): <b>993</b>	Transfer of suspected patients to Emergency Department, Tan Tock Seng Hospital
MOH Hotline: 1800-225-4122	For general enquiry

\*\* \*Instructions for updating profile and contacts details for MedAlert:

1. Go to [http://www.hpp.moh.gov.sg/HPP/DOCTORS\\_Home.html](http://www.hpp.moh.gov.sg/HPP/DOCTORS_Home.html)
  2. Click on the LOGIN button on the left side of the screen
  3. Log in using your SMC password or SINGPASS
  4. On successful login, click "My Profile" on the top of the page
  5. Scroll down and update your email address and mobile number in the required fields
- Please contact our Administrator at 63259491 / 63252953 (email: [moh\\_hpp\\_helpdesk@moh.gov.sg](mailto:moh_hpp_helpdesk@moh.gov.sg)) if you encounter any difficulties in updating or receiving any MED-ALERT from MOH.

Information platform and useful contact numbers		
CFPS	Website	<a href="http://www.cfps.org.sg">www.cfps.org.sg</a>
	Hotline	6221 8608 (Effective 5 May 2009. Operational Hrs: 8:30am - 6pm, Mon - Fri, Closed on PH).
	Email	<a href="mailto:gpflu@cfps.org.sg">gpflu@cfps.org.sg</a>
SMA	Website	<a href="http://www.sma.org.sg">www.sma.org.sg</a>
	Hotline	62231264 (Operational Hrs: 8:30am - 6pm, Mon - Fri, closed on PH)
	Email	<a href="mailto:swineflu@sma.org.sg">swineflu@sma.org.sg</a>
SHP HQ	Website	<a href="http://www.pccnetwork.com.sg">www.pccnetwork.com.sg</a>
	Hotline	6377 7083
	Email	<a href="mailto:lee.kiat.chin@singhealth.com.sg">lee.kiat.chin@singhealth.com.sg</a>
NHGP HQ	Website	<a href="http://www.nhgp.com.sg/">http://www.nhgp.com.sg/</a>
	Hotline	6355 3000
	Email	<a href="mailto:partners@nhg.com.sg">partners@nhg.com.sg</a>



MINISTRY OF HEALTH  
SINGAPORE



## CLINIC SWINE INFLUENZA PREVENTIVE MEASURES Standard Operating Procedures (Issued 29 April 2009)

### TRIAGE AND PATIENT DECLARATION ON REGISTRATION

- Triage of patients at reception to separate flu/febrile patients from other patients by checking symptoms & taking body temperature.
- Instruct patients to declare symptoms, contact and travel history in Patient Declaration Form.
- Instruct flu/febrile patients to wear surgical masks.
- Ensure flu/febrile patients are separated from other patients while in clinic.
- Keep list of all persons in clinic namely all healthcare workers, patients, & accompanying persons for contact tracing should suspect swine influenza case be diagnosed.

### REFERRAL AND NOTIFICATION OF SUSPECT SWINE INFLUENZA CASES

- Send suspect SVI patient to Emergency Medicine Department at TTSH by **dedicated ambulance service at 993**
- Designate the route for patient to go from clinic to SVI ambulance pick-up point.
- **Notify MOH immediately** by contacting the Communicable Diseases Division at **98171463** (24 hours).
- MOH will inform the notifying doctor of the need for contact tracing and prophylaxis for close contacts of the case once the diagnosis is probable or confirmed.

### ATTENDING TO SUSPECT OR PROBABLE SWINE INFLUENZA CASES & DISINFECTION

- Keep number of staff attending to suspect or probable swine influenza cases to minimum.
- Wear N95 masks or its equivalent, gloves and disposable gowns.
- Wear visors or goggles when examining patient, performing procedures or resuscitation.
- Avoid use of nebulisers.

- Perform proper hand washing after contact with these patients.
- Disinfect instruments used for examination or procedures.
- Disinfect all surfaces, objects, furniture, and fixtures that are potentially contaminated.

### ADMINISTRATIVE SURVEILLANCE OF HEALTHCARE WORKERS

- Monitor flu symptoms and temperature of all staff for at least twice a day – before work and at least once more during the day.
- All staff in the clinic who have fever (oral temperature more than 37.5 deg C are not allowed to work.

### INFECTION CONTROL MEASURES

- Ensure staff are trained to use personal protective equipment (PPE), including N95 mask, hand washing, cleaning of clinic and disposal of PPE.
- Practise hand washing or alcohol rub after each consultation to prevent transmission from doctor to patient.
- Clean contact surfaces of instruments used for examining patient e.g. stethoscope, with alcohol wipes after each use.
- Dispose of sharps, biohazard waste including PPE masks and sheaths, properly.

### DOCTORS' INFORMATION HOTLINES

- **Hotline for GPs –**  
CFPS: 6223-8608 (effective 5 May, open 8:30am to 6pm Mon to Fri)  
SMA: 6223 1264 (open 8:30am to 6pm Mon to Fri)  
To speak to doctor colleagues for clarification and assistance when faced with perplexing situations on the ground.
- **Health Professional's Portal – URL:**  
<http://www.hpp.moh.gov.sg/>.
- **Email Enquiry –**  
CFPS: [gpflu@cfps.org.sg](mailto:gpflu@cfps.org.sg)  
SMA : [swineflu@sma.org.sg](mailto:swineflu@sma.org.sg)  
MOH : [MOH\\_conversations@moh.gov.sg](mailto:MOH_conversations@moh.gov.sg)

### **Advisory For Nursing Homes, Inpatient Hospice and other Long-Term Institutional Care Facilities**

#### **Risk Assessment**

The risk to these facilities of swine influenza before a pandemic is low as patients with suspected infections would be isolated in acute hospitals. However, there is a risk of a pandemic developing very quickly and therefore there is a need to remain vigilant and prepared.

#### **Preparing your facilities for DORSCON Level Yellow**

To maximise the safety of the patients in your facility please ensure that you have made adequate preparations to deal with the possibility of a swine influenza pandemic. You should also maximise the safety of your staff by taking the appropriate measures, including ensuring that they know and practise the infection control protocols of your facility.

#### **Infection Control Facilities**

You should establish specific infection control facilities within your facility to manage patients with influenza. If you do not have sufficient isolation rooms, you may alternatively dedicate a ward for isolating these patients or cohort them as appropriate.

#### **Infection Control Measures**

1. To **minimise the risk of introduction of swine influenza** into your facility, the following are to be observed:

##### 1.1 Visitors

All visitors to your Home should be required to fill a self-declaration form giving information on their NRIC, contact numbers, travel history (for your convenience, see appendix 1 for a sample of a self-declaration form) before they are allowed to enter the Home.

You may also want to consider contacting the family of residents to inform them of the influenza preparations that your facility is making and to advise that they minimise their visits, if possible.

##### 1.2 Patients

To **minimise the risk of cross-infection**, patients with influenza should be managed in separate facilities from non-influenza patients, in accordance to your facility's isolation arrangements. Healthcare staff who manage influenza patients should not also manage non-influenza patients.

If you have reasons to suspect that a patient has swine influenza, you should send the patient to the Emergency Department of Tan Tock Seng hospital. Please call dedicated ambulance service at 993. The Ministry of Health should also be **notified immediately** of suspected cases. Please contact the Communicable Diseases Division at 98171463 (available 24 hours)

### 1.3 Healthcare staff

A staff member who has influenza symptoms should not be allowed to work until he/she has recovered. If this staff member lives in the facility's staff dormitory, adequate measures should be taken to isolate him/her from other staff members.

To **protect your healthcare staff**, you should ensure adequate supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and antiviral prophylaxis. Disinfection procedures and PPE training such as regular hand washing, gowning up and taking off PPE should be revised and reinforced with your staff.

MOH contact persons and details:

If you have enquiries, please call:

Ivy Lim 6325-1032

Li Jinkun 6325-9492

Email: MOH\_CPDD@moh.gov.sg

**(SAMPLE) SELF DECLARATION FORM**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time In: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Out: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Visitors

In light of outbreaks of Swine Influenza in countries reported, the (*Name of Home*) is committed to taking precautionary measures to safeguard the well being of its residents and staff. We would therefore appreciate your kind co-operation to truthfully respond to the following questions.

The Home would need to strongly advise you not to visit and come into contact with any of the residents in the Home if your answers to the questions were "Yes". We also reserve the right to refuse you entry and/or report your declaration to MOH as the circumstances warrant.

S/N	Description	Yes	No
1.	Do you have high fever (>38°C) or other symptoms such as cough, sore throat or runny nose?		
2.	Have you travelled to swine influenza affected areas within the last 7 days?		

Thank you.

Executive Director

\_\_\_\_\_

 Declared by \_\_\_\_\_ (Mr /Mdm) of NRIC No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name)

 of \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Address)

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_ (H/P) \_\_\_\_\_ (O) \_\_\_\_\_ (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (Pg)

Visiting: (Resident's Name / Name of Staff)

\_\_\_\_\_ of Level \_\_\_\_\_.



## **Advisory For Day Rehabilitation Centres, Dementia Day Care and Other Medical Day Care Facilities and Home Healthcare Services**

### **Risk Assessment**

The risk to these facilities of a swine influenza before a pandemic is low as patients with suspected infections would be isolated in acute hospitals. However, there is a risk of a pandemic developing very quickly and therefore there is a need to remain vigilant and prepared.

### **Preparing your facilities for DORSCON Level Yellow**

To maximise the safety of the patients in your facility please ensure that you have made adequate preparations to deal with the possibility of a swine influenza pandemic. You should also maximise the safety of your staff by taking the appropriate measures, including ensuring that they know and practise the infection control protocols of your facility.

### **Infection Control Facilities and Protocols**

Specific infection control protocols should be established and healthcare staff should be familiar with the protocols. Good personal hygiene practices among patients and staff should be reinforced.

#### **Patients**

Patients arriving at the centre facility should be triaged to assess if they have an influenza-like illness (ILI) i.e. fever (temperature of 38 degrees or more), cough, runny nose, sore throat, limb and joint pains). If you have reasons to suspect that a patient has swine influenza (i.e. fever, symptoms and travel history to affected area) you should send the patient to the Emergency Department of Tan Tock Seng hospital. Please call dedicated ambulance service at 993. The Ministry of Health should also be **notified immediately** of suspected cases. Please contact the Communicable Diseases Division at 98171463 (available 24 hours)

Patients with ILI should not be cared for at the centre as much as possible. If not possible, you should establish specific infection control facilities within your facility to manage patients with ILI e.g. separate isolation room/area. Patients with ILI should wear a surgical mask as long as they are in the centre. Healthcare staff who manage patients with ILI should not also manage non-flu patients.

#### **Visitors**

All visitors to your Home should be required to fill a self-declaration form giving information on their NRIC, contact numbers, travel history. (for your convenience, see appendix 1 of Annex C) for a sample of a self-declaration form)

You may wish to limit the number of visitors and accompanying caregivers to your centre.

Healthcare staff

A staff member who has influenza-like symptoms should not be allowed to work until he/she has recovered.

To **protect your healthcare staff**, you should ensure adequate supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Disinfection procedures and PPE training such as regular hand washing, gowning up and taking off PPE should be revised and reinforced with your staff.

For home visits, you may wish to do a phone screening before home visit to screen family members for travel history to affected areas in last 7 days and any symptoms of influenza- like illness in members of the household.

MOH contact persons and details:

If you have enquiries, please call:

Ivy Lim 6325-1032

Li Jinkun 6325-9492

Email:MOH\_CPDD@moh.gov.sg