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WV DHHR and local health investigating probable Swine flu cases

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, in partnership with local health departments, is investigating four probable cases of swine flu in Cabell, Monongalia, Raleigh and Wood counties. The cases tested positive in the state lab and will now be confirmed in a certified lab. The West Virginia laboratory will become certified after five tests have been confirmed. This is standard procedure for all labs utilizing the new test kits. Final test results are expected early next week.

“We are not surprised by this information at all,” said Dr. Cathy Slemp, state health officer and director of the Center for Threat Preparedness. “We expected to see swine flu in West Virginia,” Slemp added.

“At present, there is no reason,” Slemp said, “to believe these four cases are linked.” Three of the four cases have a strong travel history suggesting they were exposed to the virus while traveling out of state. The fourth case also has some travel history. All four cases were treated as outpatients—and have recovered or are recovering.

As soon as results were received, providers, patients and the applicable local health departments were immediately notified to assist patient management and enable local health agencies to appropriately investigate and manage the situation for their communities.

People are encouraged to wash hands frequently and to cover their mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. Those who are sick should stay at home. A patient fact sheet and other information on managing H1N1 infection is available on the WVDHHR website.

For more information go to www.wvdhhr.org or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/>