



For more information contact:
Toby D. Wagoner
West Virginia Immunization Program
Telephone: (304) 558-6438

Level five pandemic not changing state's focus regarding swine flu

Local health officials are being encouraged by Cathy Slemp, M.D., M.P.H., acting state health officer, to continue promoting good personal hygiene as a method of controlling an outbreak of swine flu. State officials are anticipating finding swine flu in West Virginia, but there are no reported cases in the state.

The World Health Organization on Wednesday elevated the pandemic threat level from four to five. "The elevated pandemic level does not change anything for us. We are going to keep doing what we're doing - educating and encouraging the public to use the standard tools of flu prevention while the situation continues to evolve," Slemp said. The public is being urged to limit the possibility of contracting the disease by performing these good hygiene practices: wash your hands often, cough and sneeze into your sleeve, avoid touching your eyes and nose, discard any used tissues and stay home when you're sick. These simple tips are effective ways to prevent the spread of the swine flu virus and many other viruses transmitted through the air.

Dr. Slemp will be a guest on West Virginia Public Television's widely watched, locally produced TV show, ***Doctors on Call***, this evening at 8p.m. Plan to watch to learn more about the steps West Virginia is taking related to swine influenza.

For more information about swine influenza, visit the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources' informational web sites: www.wwidep.org or www.wvflu.org.