

For Immediate Release
September 25, 2009
For more information,
Contact: Michelle Wilson at 970-668-9161

County Coroner and Summit County Public Health - 2009 H1N1 Influenza Update and Guidance

**Summit County, Colorado- JOINT MEDIA RELEASE FROM THE SUMMIT COUNTY
OFFICE OF THE CORONER & PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

On September 23, 2009 the Summit County community experienced the tragic loss of Bryan Pineda Rosas. The autopsy performed on September 24, 2009 indicates the preliminary cause of death was respiratory failure. It is anticipated that following further testing the respiratory failure will be due to influenza. The autopsy and medical history also indicate that Pineda Rosas suffered from pre-existing respiratory conditions, which included chronic bronchitis and asthma resulting in his death. These results coupled with Pineda Rosas's medical history are consistent with a typical seasonal or H1N1 flu fatality. Complete autopsy results are dependent on microscopic tissue exam results and will not be available for several weeks. As a result of prevalent flu in our County we are in constant contact with local health providers including the hospital. At this time one child that has tested positive for flu A is currently hospitalized at the Summit Medical Center and is in stable condition.

Currently the 2009 H1N1 flu presents no greater health risk than the typical seasonal flu, this is a rapidly evolving situation and the Summit County Public Health Department continues to work with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment to monitor 2009 H1N1 flu. Due to similarities in severity and treatment methods with seasonal flu - testing for 2009 H1N1 is not necessary, patient symptoms will dictate specific treatment not verification that it is 2009 H1N1 flu. Symptoms of 2009 H1N1 flu and seasonal flu include fever or chills *and* cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms of flu can include runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting. For more information visit www.flu.gov <<http://www.flu.gov>>.

Our public schools continue to follow the guidance from the local public health departments. Schools are monitoring student absenteeism due to flu-like illness and reporting that on a daily basis to public health. At this time, public health is not recommending the closure of schools, cancellation of athletics or activities due to the H1N1 virus. It has not been demonstrated that closing or canceling these events has any effect on the virus circulating throughout the community. Even if schools or events were canceled people would still gather in numerous other public and private venues, i.e. grocery stores, retail outlets, churches, recreation centers, community centers, homes and other activities. A death in our community has heightened awareness and local monitoring of this public health situation. The severity of H1N1 remains consistent with seasonal flu, we experience seasonal flu deaths each year.

Seasonal flu shots are available within Summit County at various pharmacies and medical offices. Increased demand for free seasonal flu shots from Summit County Public Health has exhausted their supply.

Summit County Government and Summit School District continue to strongly encourage compliance with the following Summit County Public Health recommendations:

- Stay home if you are sick until for at least 24 hours after you no longer have a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) or signs of a fever (have chills, feel very warm, have a flushed appearance, or are sweating). This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medicines (any medicine that contains ibuprofen or acetaminophen).
- Seek medical attention if any of the following serious symptoms occur. Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen, sudden dizziness, confusion, severe or persistent vomiting, seizures.
- Remember to cough and sneeze into your elbow and wash your hands often with soap and water. Use an alcohol-based hand cleaner if soap and water are not available.
- Get the seasonal flu vaccine now and the 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine when available.
 - Summit County Public Health expects the vaccine to be available for higher risk individuals beginning in October. Information on higher risk categories will be made available after the vaccine is received. Depending on vaccine supply it is expected to be available for everyone by December. It will be a single shot vaccine and trials of the vaccine place its safety on par with the seasonal flu vaccine.
- Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home. Have the following items on hand: a supply of fever-reducing medicines that contain acetaminophen or ibuprofen, alcohol-based hand cleaners, tissues, and other items that may be useful and help avoid the need to make trips out in public while you are sick.
- Learn about the flu and what you can do. To find out more about preparing for the flu, go to www.flu.gov <<http://www.flu.gov/>> or call 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636).

You are advised to monitor media outlets as well as health agency websites for the most up to date information.

Should you have questions contact the Summit County Public Health at 970-668-9161.