



STATE OF WASHINGTON

September 22, 2014

ALTSA: NH #2014-015  
INFLUENZA AND PNEUMOCOCCAL IMMUNIZATION REMINDER

Dear Nursing Facility/Home Administrator:

**We need your help to protect residents and staff from the flu and pneumonia this season.** Every year, about 100 to 1,000 Washington residents die from influenza or its complications with most deaths occurring among those 65 years or older.

**Create a safe and healthy environment for everyone. Minimize the impact of flu and pneumonia by:**

- 1. Encouraging all residents and caregivers, without contraindications, to get vaccinated against flu and encouraging pneumococcal vaccination in those for whom it is indicated.** People can be vaccinated against flu at any given time of the year. Early fall, however, is the optimal time to receive the flu vaccine as it ensures protection before flu begins to circulate in our state. Several types of flu vaccine are available this season, and there is no preferential recommendation for one vaccine product over another in adults.
- 2. Taking measures to minimize transmission, such as washing hands or using hand sanitizers frequently.** To get information about infection control, visit: [www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/fluoutbrk-LTCF.pdf](http://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/fluoutbrk-LTCF.pdf)
- 3. Calling your local health department if you notice a sudden increase in acute respiratory illness (two or more ill residents within 72 hours) or when any resident tests positive for flu.** They can help with advice about testing, treatment, prophylaxis and infection control.

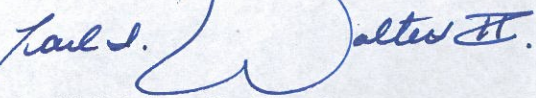
The following list of resources can help you gain additional knowledge about flu prevention:

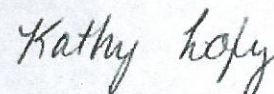
- Department of Health: [www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/Flu.aspx](http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/Flu.aspx)
- Department of Social and Health Services: [www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov/professional/nh.htm](http://www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov/professional/nh.htm)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov/flu/](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/)

We also encourage you to visit [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/adults/for-practice/standards/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/adults/for-practice/standards/index.html) to learn about the revised Standards for Adult Immunization Practice. Make adult vaccination a standard of care in your facility!

Thank you for your continued effort to fight flu and protect those who are especially vulnerable.

Sincerely,

  
Carl I. Walters II., Director  
Residential Care Services  
Department of Social and Health Services

  
Kathy Lofy, MD  
State Health Officer  
Washington State Department of Health