



STATE OF WASHINGTON

August 31, 2015

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INFLUENZA AND PNEUMOCOCCAL IMMUNIZATION REMINDER

Dear Nursing Facility/Home Administrator:

Help us protect residents and staff from the flu and pneumonia this season. Flu can be introduced into a facility like yours by newly admitted residents, staff, and visitors. Residents in your facility can experience severe and fatal illness during flu outbreaks, and pneumonia is one of the most common flu complications.

The following steps will help you minimize the impact of flu and pneumonia in your facility:

- 1. Encourage all residents and staff who do not have contraindications to get vaccinated against flu and encourage pneumococcal vaccination in those for whom it is indicated.** People can be vaccinated against flu at any time of the year. However, early fall is the best time to receive the flu vaccine because it ensures protection before flu begins to circulate widely in our state.
- 2. Take measures to minimize transmission – wash your hands or use hand sanitizers frequently.** For infection control info go to:
www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/fluoutbrk-LTCF.pdf
- 3. Call 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. To find your local health department, visit: www.doh.wa.gov/localhealth.

In addition, the following resources can help you get ready for the flu season:

- Department of Health: www.doh.wa.gov/flu
- Department of Social and Health Services: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/residential-care-services/residential-care-services>. (You will find this letter as well as quick links to flu and other adult immunization resources.)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/flu/ and www.cdc.gov/Features/Pneumonia/
- Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices vaccine recommendations: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/index.html

Nursing Facility Administrator
August 31, 2015
Page 2

We also encourage you to practice the **Standards for Adult Immunization**. Please routinely **assess** the immunization status of all your residents and **strongly** recommend any vaccines they need. If you are a facility that provides immunizations, please **administer** and document needed vaccines. If you are not a facility that provides immunizations, please **refer** residents to a vaccination provider and confirm that the vaccines were given. For more information about the standards, visit: www.izsummitpartners.org/adult-immunization-standards/.

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

Sincerely,



Kathy Morgan
Interim Director
Residential Care Services
Department of Social and Health Services



Kathy Lofy, MD
State Health Officer
Department of Health