



10 July 2009

**Pandemic declared:  
“GET READY, GET THROUGH” AWARENESS PROMOTED IN PAPAKURA**

As the global Influenza A H1N1 outbreak spreads through New Zealand, Papakura District Council is urging people to take steps to ensure they are able to manage through a period of illness or isolation.

With confirmed cases now numbering more than 1431 nationally, the Ministry of Health has stopped listing “probable” cases and the Council’s Civil Defence staff are highlighting the need for people in the community to consider how they will cope if they or people close to them develop the flu.

Council Chief Executive Theresa Stratton says people in the community should now be making plans to cope with time off work and considering how they would deal with being confined to their homes – either if they become ill or if they are required to look after family members who are ill.

In particular, the Council’s Civil Defence staff are urging people to make sure they have networks that can support them if they develop flu. Family and friends are the “glue” that keep communities together during a pandemic, making sure people have food and medicine and that nobody is isolated by illness.

“Think about your Get Ready, Get Thru preparations, and if you haven't done so already, get your essential emergency kits together. Most businesses and service organisations have already done their planning for how they will get through this outbreak, working out what they need to do to maintain services and staff numbers in essential parts of what they do. Now people in the community should be working out the same things for themselves and their families.”

For those who do contract a flu virus, spending a week isolated at home in quarantine could pose problems if there's not enough food and essential supplies in the house.

"People should review their food stocks, medicines, and other household essentials and make sure they have enough to last a week."

Papakura District Council has worked through its own planning for how to maintain essential services if the pandemic strikes.

"At Papakura District Council we have carried out our planning and education programmes for staff. There are posters in all public areas of our buildings including those operated by other organisations on our behalf. Though we are watching the situation closely, to date it's business as usual with all services operating as normal," Ms Stratton says.

# MEDIA RELEASE

Companies that supply essential services to the Council have also gone through their own business continuity planning to make sure they can continue to function with increasing numbers of people developing seasonal or A (H1N1) flu.

Any change to the status of Council operations will be advised through recognised communication channels used for Civil Defence events. Ms Stratton said the virus is expected to spread through the country in coming months but common sense is the key to minimising its effect on family, whanau, business and the community.

"It's inevitable that there will be community spread, with more people affected and having to be isolated at home. That makes it even more important that people review their emergency supplies and ensure they have enough stocks for a week. People should review 'family and friends' contacts and networks to ensure that there's someone to call on to provide assistance if necessary."

More information about common sense steps to take to stay safe during the pandemic period is at [www.moh.govt.nz](http://www.moh.govt.nz) and at <http://www.aucklandcivildefence.org.nz/>

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## Key messages about staying safe during the influenza pandemic

- **Be prepared**
- **If you've got flu symptoms**, do not go to work or school. Make contact with your GP and get a diagnosis. Phone your GP before visiting them. Stay at home for seven days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is longer.
- **Stop the spread of flu germs** by:
  - Covering coughs and sneezes
  - Regularly washing your hands and drying them thoroughly
  - Avoiding contact with sick people and reducing time spent in crowded settings.
- **If your condition worsens**, seek medical advice by phoning Healthline 0800 611 116 or your healthcare provider.

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