

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 06/12/2015

TO: Grant County Healthcare Providers

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT

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2014-2015 Influenza Season Has Ended

GRANT COUNTY, WA – Grant County Health Officer, Dr. Alexander Brzezny, has announced the end of the 2014-2015 influenza season. Influenza activity in the state is low and numbers of reported cases in Grant County have returned to pre-epidemic levels. During this season, the Grant County Health District (GCHD) received notification of 652 positive influenza lab reports including 4 influenza related deaths.

In most circumstances healthcare providers are not mandated to report influenza test results. In order to monitor amounts of influenza, GCHD partnered with seven healthcare facilities who agreed to report positive influenza results. GCHD staff appreciates the cooperation of Columbia Basin Hospital, Confluence Health (Moses Lake Clinic), Mattawa Community Medical Clinic, Moses Lake Community Health Center, and Quincy Community Health Center, Wahluke Family Health Center, and Quincy Valley Medical Center. These reports assisted GCHD with monitoring influenza activity in the county and facilitated timely notification to the healthcare community and the public when influenza was increasing.

It is not uncommon for the influenza season (above-epidemic levels of influenza activity) to last into May or June. Grant County has not received reports of influenza cases since mid- May. Therefore, with no additional influenza cases for two latency periods, the 2014-2015 influenza epidemic is likely over. Additional cases or clusters may still occur and continue surveillance for influenza is appropriate. Healthcare workers are encouraged to continue practicing proper respiratory etiquette and use PPE's and recommend masking of patients as appropriate when providing care to patients with respiratory illness, especially in those with cough.

In February of each year, the World Health Organization (WHO) consults with experts from WHO Collaborating Centers, Essential Regulatory Laboratories, and other partners to review data generated by the worldwide network of influenza laboratories. This year, WHO made the following vaccine composition recommendations for the 2015-2016 trivalent (3 strain) seasonal influenza vaccine for the Northern Hemisphere:

- A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus;
- A/Switzerland/9715293/2013 (H3N2)-like virus;
- B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus.

Quadrivalent (4 strain) vaccine will include the above listed strains and an additional B strain, B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus. (www.cdc.gov/flu/about/season/vaccine-selection.htm)



Healthcare facilities are encouraged to start offering the vaccine as soon as it becomes available.

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