

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NOTE: Dr. Monroe will be available 07/18/09 from 9 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. to do in-person interviews at the INShape Indiana Black & Minority Health Fair at the IBE Summer Celebration in Hall D of the Indiana Convention Center, in downtown Indianapolis.

STATE HEALTH COMMISSIONER REPORTS SECOND PANDEMIC H1N1 INFLUENZA DEATH IN INDIANA

INDIANAPOLIS---State Health Commissioner Judy Monroe, M.D. today reported a resident of Lake County has died from complications related to pandemic H1N1 influenza, the second death linked to this novel flu virus in Indiana.

The Indiana State Department of Health will not be releasing any other information about the individual for confidentiality reasons. State health officials are working closely with the Lake County Health Department to investigate the case and have already communicated with all close contacts and health care providers who might have been exposed to the case.

"I was saddened to hear of another death from pandemic H1N1 flu and would like to offer my deepest sympathies to the family for their loss," said Dr. Monroe. "It is a sad reminder influenza has the potential to cause serious disease or even death."

Dr. Monroe reminds the public the message about pandemic H1N1 flu has not changed. Because people can spread influenza virus before they become ill, she says it is extremely important to always practice the three C's:

- Clean – properly wash your hands frequently
- Cover – cover your cough and sneeze
- Contain – contain your germs by staying home if you are sick

"Given the current heightened awareness about influenza and the uncertainty about what we can expect from the flu season this Fall, it is an ideal time to get the public engaged in pandemic influenza planning," said Dr. Monroe. "We have worked hard with our local, state, and federal partners to develop good plans for pandemic influenza. However, for the state to be truly prepared for the possibility of more severe illness in the Fall flu season, every one of us needs to actively participate."

Dr. Monroe says there are also important steps the public can take to prepare for a pandemic or any public health emergency:

- Store a supply of water and food to last for two weeks. If you cannot get to a store, or stores are low on supplies, it will be important for you to have extra supplies on hand.
- Have any nonprescription drugs and health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins.

- Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they got sick, or what will be needed to care for them in your home.
- Find out if your job requires additional preparation or prevention steps and talk to your supervisor about your company's Continuity of Operations Plan (i.e. can employees work from home, if needed?).
- Have an alternative childcare plan if schools and daycares are closed.
- Volunteer with local groups to prepare and assist with emergency response.
- Learn more about pandemic influenza and how to prepare at: www.pandemicflu.gov.
- Quit smoking with the help of resources like 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669).

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