



Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Health  
**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**  
San Lazaro Compound, Rizal Avenue  
Sta. Cruz, Manila, Philippines 1003



30 May 2009

**DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM**

No. 2009-0144

**To :** DOH Bureaus, Services, Centers for Health Development (CHDs), Hospitals and Attached Agencies, All Services, Units and Teams Designated to Work for the Prevention, Containment, Control and Clinical Management of the Influenza A (H1N1) Virus and All Others Concerned

**Subject:** Technical Guidelines, Standards and Other Instructions for Reference in the Pandemic Response to Influenza A(H1N1)

Whereas, Presidential Decree No. 1566 (1978) entitled "*Strengthening the Philippine Disaster Control Capability and Establishing a National Program on Community Disaster*" mandates the national government agencies to support the central and local governments in time of emergencies and according to their field of responsibility;

Whereas, the World Health Organization (WHO) reports of human cases and deaths secondary to a virus originally found among swine population in Mexico and of similar occurrences in other countries, and initiated the global alert and response to the influenza A H1N1 virus, recently identified as the causative agent of the imminent pandemic;

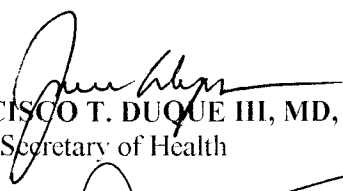
Whereas, the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) through Memorandum 06 s. 2009, designated Secretary Francisco T. Duque III, Secretary of Health as the "Overall Crisis Manager (De-facto NDCC Chairman) for 2009 A/H1N1 flu";

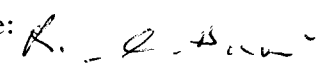
Whereas, Republic Act No. 9271 "An Act Strengthening the Regulatory Capacity of the Department of Health in Quarantine and International Health Surveillance, Repealing for the Purpose Republic Act No. 123 of 1947, as Amended" prescribed regulations for the apprehension, detention or surveillance for the purpose of preventing the introduction, transmission or spread of public health emergencies of international concern;

Whereas, because this is the first time that influenza AH1N1 is affecting human populations its epidemiologic trend and clinical effects are largely unpredictable;

The DOH hereby issues **Interim Guidelines No. 12 on the Response Level Guide for Schools to Control Influenza A (H1N1)**, based on Administrative Order 2009-0009 entitled "Application of Department of Health Policies, Plans and Guidelines Pertaining to Influenza A H1N1 Virus, dated May 08, 2009."

For compliance.

  
FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III, MD, MSc  
Secretary of Health

Conforme:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
RAMON C. BACANI  
Undersecretary, Department of Education

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
ATTY. JULITO D. VITRIOLO  
Executive Director, Commission on Higher Education





**INTERIM GUIDELINES NO. 12**  
**RESPONSE LEVEL GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS TO CONTROL NOVEL INFLUENZA A (H1N1)**

This set of interim guidelines is an additional guide for school administrators at all levels of education, formal and informal, public and private, in the Philippines. This set of guidelines complements **Interim Guidelines No. 10 For the Prevention and Control of Influenza A (H1N1) in Schools** which describes the general principles for prevention and containment of novel influenza A (H1N1) infection in schools. Addition of this set of guidelines is in response to demands for more specific guide to determining the need for suspension of classes in individual schools or of several schools in a contiguous area.

**Use of the Response Level Guide for Schools**

Firstly, DOH reiterates that each individual school management is encouraged to be vigilant of events that may point to the presence of infection among the school population. Thus Interim Guideline No. 10 states:

1. *“Monitor indicative incidents. The following occurrences may suggest that there is on-going transmission of influenza in school:*
  - 1.1. *simultaneous or series of absences clustering in specific classes or faculty groups*
  - 1.2. *clustering of reported flu-like illness among users of specific buildings or function rooms*
  - 1.3. *severe or unusual respiratory illness in one or more student, teacher or staff*
2. *Ensure medical evaluation and case follow-up of all types of illness manifesting with fever or respiratory symptoms reported among the school population (students, teaching and non-teaching staff and administrators). This should be done by the medical or nursing staff in coordination with the infection control team.”*

Secondly, each individual school administration is reminded to coordinate closely with its counterpart local health office and/or the regional Center of Health Development-DOH for the **official statistical and epidemiological situation about the influenza A (H1N1)** in specific areas and for **assistance in the provision of other health services**. The matrix on the different response levels below details the indications for the various appropriate responses to influenza in schools.

**Matrix on Influenza A (H1N1) Response Levels System in Schools**

	<b>Response Level 1</b>	<b>Response Level 2</b>	<b>Response Level 3</b>	<b>Response Level 4</b>
<b>Criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmed cases of novel influenza A (H1N1) in other countries but no confirmed case in the Philippines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmed cases of novel influenza A (H1N1) in the country</li> <li>• No confirmed case in the school</li> <li>• No confirmed community level transmission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmed cases of novel influenza A (H1N1) in the country</li> <li>• Confirmed case in school</li> <li>• No confirmed community level transmission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmed cases of novel Influenza A (H1N1) in the country</li> <li>• Confirmed community level transmission</li> </ul>

	<b>Response Level 1</b>	<b>Response Level 2</b>	<b>Response Level 3</b>	<b>Response Level 4</b>
<b>Response</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep updated about the status and extent of novel Influenza A (H1N1) globally</li> <li>• Campaign for proper hand washing, general hygiene and cough/sneeze manners</li> <li>• Make available hygiene and sanitation facilities</li> <li>• Line list and monitor health status of students, faculty and non-teaching personnel who have history of travel to countries with reported confirmed cases of novel Influenza A (H1N1) virus infection</li> <li>• Observe precautionary measures during school gathering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level I Response PLUS:</li> <li>• Influenza Like Illness (ILI) surveillance ( fever, cough or sore throat)</li> <li>• Line list of students, faculty and non-teaching personnel with influenza-like illness</li> <li>• Monitor trend, cause, status of absentees (students/faculty/non teaching personnel)</li> <li>• Isolate in designated room and refer to the school clinic or to a health facility persons identified to have signs and symptoms of ILI while in the school</li> <li>• Students/faculty/non-teaching personnel with signs and symptoms of ILI shall not report to school but inform the school physician/local health authorities for proper advice</li> <li>• Establish referral system with health care facilities</li> <li>• Report to Local Health Office (MHO/CHO) and/or regional DOH Center for Health Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspension of classes in the affected school(s)</li> <li>• Report to Local Health Office (MHO/CHO) and/or regional DOH Center for Health Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspension of classes in the affected area(s)</li> <li>• Report to Local Health Office (MHO/CHO) and/or regional DOH Center for Health Development</li> </ul>
<b>Declaration of Suspension of Classes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No suspension of classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No suspension of classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If one school has confirmed positive case of novel influenza A (H1N1), the School Principal can declare the suspension of classes</li> <li>• If two or more schools in one city or municipality have confirmed positive case of novel influenza A (H1N1), the Division Superintendent can declare the suspension</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If there is community level transmission in a city or municipality or several cities or municipalities, the Division Superintendent can declare the suspension of classes in the affected cities or municipalities; or depending on local situation, in the entire province</li> </ul>

	Response Level 1	Response Level 2	Response Level 3	Response Level 4
			<p>of classes in the affected schools and adjacent areas; or depending on the local situation, in the entire city or municipality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Higher Education Institution Heads can declare suspension of classes in their respective schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If there is community level transmission in two or more provinces, the Regional Director of DepEd/CHED/TESDA can declare the suspension of classes in the affected provinces; or, depending on local situation, in the entire region</li> <li>The Higher Education Institution Heads can declare suspension of classes in their respective schools.</li> </ul>

- Confirmation of cases as well as community level transmission shall come from the Department of Health. The school administrator shall coordinate with DOH.
- The Secretary of DepEd/ Chairperson of CHED/Director General of TESDA can suspend classes at any stage depending on the information or recommendation provided by the DOH.

**When to Lift School Suspension or Deactivate Response Levels III and IV**

- Schools may open 10 calendar days from the date of suspension of classes provided students, faculty, and non-teaching personnel with influenza like symptoms or confirmed cases remain isolated at home or at designated health facilities.

**Actions to be taken by the school prior to resumption of classes**

- General cleaning of the school
- Cleaning the chair, desks, doors, toilets, lavatories and garbage bins with disinfectants
- Ensure provision of water, soap and other supplies and materials for proper hygiene purposes
- Intensify campaign for hand and respiratory hygiene and general sanitation

**Actions to be taken by the Local Health Authorities prior to resumption of Classes**

- Ensure compliance of the school on the actions to be taken by the school prior to resumption of classes
- Provide assistance in the provision of health services related to the prevention and control of novel influenza A (H1N1)
- Intensify campaign for hand and respiratory hygiene and general sanitation

Issued by the DOH Emergency Management Task Force for the Pandemic Response to Influenza A (H1N1)