



AAPHP E-News, April 24, 2009

Supplement

This is an electronic update for members and friends of the American Association of Public Health Physicians (AAPHP). We issue this from time to time, whenever several items of interest come to our attention.

Please send items of interest for the E-News -- and any other feedback -- to E-News editor [Kevin Sherin, MD, MPH](#). . Thanks!

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1) Influenza Alerts – Bird Flu and Swine Flu and New Research

Influenza Alert- The CDC has announced that there are 8 Confirmed US cases of swine flu H1 N1 linked to the Mexico outbreak. Health Canada reported that link on CBC before CDC confirmed on April 24. WHO Margaret Chan has issued a global alert. Crowds have been banned in Mexico city, and US surveillance efforts for all 50 states are on Medium level of alert. CBC Canada reports that 20 people are dead from swine flu related respiratory illnesses in Central Mexico. The 2 US states reporting thus far are California and Texas, both border states. Sentinel Providers nationwide are asked to ramp up submission of samples per CDC's EPI-X links and instructions to state and local health departments.

On April 21, Reuters reported from Cairo that a six-year-old Egyptian boy died of H5N1 influenza, the 24th such human fatality in Egypt. 67 bird flu cases in humans have now been reported now from the most populous Arab country, which has the greatest number of H5N1 cases outside of Asia. Egypt has seen a surge in human cases in recent months, with 16 confirmed since the start of the year, compared to seven cases between Jan. 1 and April 17 last year.

On April 21, the New Scientist magazine, (according to Cleveland.com) reported that a Harvard research team may be close to finding universal flu vaccine. Hemagglutinin, is a lollipop-shaped structure. Existing vaccines stimulate production of antibodies that bind to the head of the structure -- which changes year to year. Marasco's Harvard team found antibodies that target proteins on the "stalk" of the lollipop. These proteins barely change between flu strains, which suggests they don't evolve quickly. The team produced antibodies to target proteins in bulk, and injected them into mice before and after they were infected with a range of flu viruses, including H5N1 bird flu, pandemic H1N1 and ordinary flu. The antibodies protected or cured the animals in each case.

On April 22, the Washington Post reported that CDC is investigating two highly unusual cases of a previously unknown strain of swine flu that was found in the San Diego area late last month. The cases occurred almost simultaneously in children who had no contact with pigs or each other, a scenario that raised the possibility that the illnesses may be the sign of an emerging pandemic strain of influenza. There are 12 human cases involving swine flu in the last three years.

2. Tobacco bill goes to Senate

In a surprise move, the Democrats have decided to bring the House version of the FDA/Tobacco bill to the Senate floor sometime within the next two to three weeks. If the text of the bill reflected the summary of the bill used to recruit endorsements and congressional sponsors, we, too, would have enthusiastically endorsed this bill. Unfortunately, this is simply not the case. Per our analyses (posted on the tobacco issues page at www.aaphp.org) – this bill, if passed in its current form will do more harm than good in terms of future tobacco-related illness and death. For detail, check the latest postings on our tobacco issues page.

3. MARK YOUR CALENDARS: The AAPHP annual meeting will be held Saturday evening, June 13 at the AMA annual meeting in Chicago. The AMA meeting runs from the 13-15th, and is always held in Chicago. Our AAPHP meeting will be Saturday evening, June 13 at 5:30PM in the Chicago Hilton and Towers, Room Columbus C and D. I want as many AMA members who are AAPHP members as possible to attend this meeting.

Our speaker will be Rodney G. Hood, MD, Past President of the National Medical Association. His topic will be Health Equity and National Health Reform. There is a possibility that our forum may also include a speaker from AARP.

4. Membership services: Sandra Magyar for Green Cove Springs FL has been contracted for membership services. We look forward to rapidly getting your 2009 dues notices to you. It helps AAPHP with transaction costs if we can do this electronically. Please send your PREFERRED email address to Sandy at magyarsf@bellsouth.net

If you haven't done so already, please download AAPHP's 2009 Membership Form right away at <http://www.aaphp.org/Membership/2009MembForm.pdf> and send it to us by fax or postal mail.

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