

HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING H1N1 (swine) FLU ARE THE SAME FOR ALL NORTH CAROLINA RESIDENTS, INCLUDING LATINOS AND OTHER IMMIGRANTS

Public Health leaders in North Carolina continue to monitor the novel H1N1 (swine) flu, including partnering with the Latino community and minority populations in North Carolina. Latino farm workers have the same health concerns as any resident of North Carolina and public health leaders are reaching out to offer information in Spanish for recommendations about signs, symptoms, precautions, and isolation to provide preparation and treatment guidelines for the novel H1N1 flu.

Farm workers and other individuals exhibiting symptoms should call a health care provider or their local health department in order to get instructions on how to be seen. This epidemic is a serious health issue and we want to make sure the health and safety of **ALL** North Carolina residents is protected.

Since many Latinos have as a culture practice to greet by kissing or shaking hands, state and local health officials are advising to restrain from doing so, especially if a person is obviously ill.

The Department of Public Health is currently offering a Spanish-speaking Public Information Officer who is translating and distributing information to Latino media across the state. Updates are being posted on the NC Department of Public Health Spanish website, http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/espanol/swine_espanol.htm. Spanish language materials about novel (H1N1) flu are also available on the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website, <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/espanol/info-general.htm>.

Currently, the North Carolina Office of Citizens Services has established an information telephone number, N.C. CARE-LINE (1-800-662-7030), responding to calls from the public regarding the novel H1N1 flu. The Care-line can answer questions in 150 languages and the 10 most spoken languages in NC, including Spanish.

Immigration status is not a concern in this public health issue. No individual(s) will be asked their immigration status in order to receive treatment. Deportation is not a function of health departments in North Carolina. In fact, we encourage all residents regardless of citizenship or resident status to use the services of the health department during this epidemic because this affects individuals regardless of race, age, and color or citizenship status. Latinos and any other individuals are safe in seeking services from health departments in regards to this issue.

Health officials are urging and recommending that travel to Mexico be deferred at this time. It is important to note that currently, no travel bans to Mexico have been issued by the United States. Information about travel can be found at www.cdc.gov/swineflu. The virus incubation period is from 2 to 7 days. If you have a relative or friend who just arrived from Mexico or from any of the states where the novel H1N1 flu has been confirmed and has flu-like symptoms, including **fever**, this person should call their doctor immediately or contact their local health department to get information on what to do.