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First Case of H1N1 Confirmed in Yukon

WHITEHORSE – Yukon’s Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Brendan Hanley, confirmed today that Yukon has its first case of laboratory confirmed H1N1 Influenza.

The individual is an adult female who experienced a mild form of H1N1 and is now fully recovered. The individual presented to her physician with symptoms and a travel history to Mexico. She was not hospitalized.

“We fully expected it was a case of when, not if, we would see H1N1 in Yukon,” Hanley said. “Our surveillance and monitoring systems are working as they should and our health care practitioners have taken the testing and care guidelines to heart.”

The Yukon government issued its first health alert in late April when the first cases of H1N1 were reported in Mexico, the United States and Canada. The government continues to work closely with the Public Health Agency of Canada to monitor for influenza activity related to H1N1.

Hanley says that Yukon residents have no reason to be more concerned now than before. “I am viewing this as second seasonal flu that has hit the territory,” he said. “Symptoms of almost all the Canadian cases have been mild. However, like seasonal influenza, this is a disease that can occasionally lead to serious illness. For this reason we will continue to closely monitor the spread of H1N1 in Yukon and work with our health providers in managing cases and contacts according to current guidelines.”

Symptoms are similar to seasonal flu including cough, fever, headache, sore throat, fatigue, muscle ache and runny nose.

“I remind Yukon residents that hand washing is the single most important way to avoid getting the flu. We can all help to protect each other by washing our hands frequently and thoroughly with soap, and by coughing or sneezing into our elbows,” Hanley added.

Yukoners who contract flu-like symptoms should stay home, self-isolate, and rest for the longer of either seven days or resolution of their fever and other symptoms. Anyone whose flu symptoms are getting worse and who wishes to be seen by a health care provider should call ahead first, or call the Yukon HealthLine at 811.

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