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Yukon Confirms First Yukon Death From H1N1 Complications

WHITEHORSE – Yukon’s Medical Officer of Health Dr. Brendan Hanley confirmed today that Yukon has had its first death linked with the H1N1 Influenza.

“This is a very sad event and I send my deepest condolences to the family,” Hanley said.

The Public Health Agency of Canada’s last published statistics says there have been 95 deaths in Canada attributed to H1N1, and 80 per cent of victims had underlying medical conditions.

The young girl did have a chronic medical condition. She was admitted to hospital last week before being transferred to pediatric ICU in Vancouver last Monday. She died Sunday evening. Testing has confirmed she did have the H1N1 flu virus.

“This is a strong reminder that influenza is not something to be taken lightly,” Hanley said.

“Every year in Canada, there are between 3,000 and 5,000 deaths. As a whole, we are seeing smaller numbers of deaths with this virus than from regular influenza; however we are seeing younger people affected. It is more important than ever for Yukoners to take proper precautions to protect themselves and others, including getting vaccinated.”

Dr. Hanley said that H1N1 has been circulating widely in Yukon since mid-October.

“The people who have been ill, for the most part, have only been mildly ill. Five patients with H1N1 to date have been admitted to hospital in Yukon. One was treated and released and the other three are recovering,” Hanley said.

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