



October 1, 2012

To: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Subject: Monitoring Influenza-Like-Illness in Schools

Dear Colleague:

Public Health in New Brunswick has been preparing for the upcoming seasonal increase in activity for influenza, typically starting in the fall.

Public Health monitors influenza activity through surveillance in order to guide prevention and control measures. One indicator of influenza activity in the community is based on reports of outbreaks of influenza-like-illness and absenteeism due to influenza-like-illness sent from schools to Regional Public Health offices. This process allows Public Health to monitor regional levels of influenza activity, and detect influenza outbreaks as early as possible. Other sources of information that Public Health uses for year-round surveillance include outbreaks from nursing homes and other institutions, laboratory results, and sentinel physician reports of influenza.

Regional Public Health offices will be contacting the schools directly regarding specific requirements for reporting of influenza-like-illness in schools.

The Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health encourages you to inform schools about the upcoming influenza season and reporting of influenza-like-illness to Regional Public Health.

Your cooperation and participation in supporting influenza surveillance is greatly appreciated, and helps us protect the health of all New Brunswickers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cheryl Yates".

Cheryl Yates
Director, Communicable Disease Control