

Media Release

For Immediate Release

October 29, 2009

Bridgepoint Health Manages H1N1 Outbreak

TORONTO – Bridgepoint Health is currently managing a confirmed H1N1 influenza outbreak on one unit of the hospital.

“Outbreaks are common at this time of year, especially in hospitals and other health care settings where there is added risk because people are compromised and living in close quarters,” said Jane Merkley, Bridgepoint’s Vice President of Programs, Services and Professional Affairs. “It’s critical that visitors and staff not come to the hospital if they have flu-like symptoms.”

As of today, 11 patients and five health-care professionals on our Neuromuscular Support Unit are experiencing symptoms of H1N1 influenza, including coughing, sneezing, fever and muscle pain. Testing has confirmed the H1N1 virus. Two cases have been transferred to an acute care hospital for closer monitoring and treatment.

“Bridgepoint Health is working with Toronto Public Health and our Infectious Disease Specialists to manage the outbreak and contain its spread,” said Bridgepoint President and CEO Marian Walsh. “From the onset of the outbreak, we responded as though the virus was H1N1, which lab results now confirm. We were not going to take any chances.”

Those with symptoms were treated with antiviral medication. Staff and patients on the unit who are not experiencing symptoms are receiving antiviral prophylaxis and the H1N1 vaccine to help ensure that they are protected.

Special precautions have been put in place to prevent the further spread of infection on the unit, including the use of personal protective equipment, and additional cleaning of the unit, equipment and patient rooms. As a further precaution, Bridgepoint has closed the unit to new admissions and visitors until further notice.

The hospital-wide vaccination program – available to all staff, patients, volunteers and students – is well underway.

Bridgepoint Health is Canada’s leader in the prevention and management of complex chronic disease and disability. Affiliated with the University of Toronto, Bridgepoint Health is restoring lives through innovations in care, research and teaching.

-30-

Media Contact:

Media Relations, Bridgepoint Health
416-302-5536
media@bridgepointhealth.ca