Vanderburgh County Health Department
Oak Park Professional Building
420 Mulberry Street
Evansville, Indiana 47713-1231
Phone:
Web Page: www.vanderburghgov.org/health

March 1, 2010

Re: Visitor restriction policies on healthcare facilities

Greetings:

A number of nursing homes, clinics, and hospitals have asked for guidance regarding visitation and, in general, if they can get back to business as usual.

There is no question that the incidence of H1N1 viral infection is subsiding but the influenza H1N1 is still with us. Deaths continue to be reported in Illinois and syndromic surveillance continues to pick up influenza like illness in Vanderburgh County. I continue to emphasize that people need to be immunized against the H1N1 virus.

Based on current surveillance findings, the level of restriction initiated during the height of the pandemic in the fall of 2009, such as those restrictions based on age, may be reconsidered. Hospital and nursing home officials should consider the people they serve and the level of incidence of influenza in the local community.

The following actions, however, continue to remain as pro-active control measures against the H1N1 virus as well as many other communicable diseases.

1. All visitors should be screened for symptoms of acute illness before entering the facility. Those who exhibit symptoms should not be permitted to enter the facility.

2. Visitors should be instructed to limit their movement within the facility.

3. Before entering the patient's room, healthcare personnel should instruct visitors on hand hygiene, avoiding contact with surfaces, and the use of personal protective equipment according to facility policy.

For further information on the H1N1 virus, control measures, or other diseases, please contact our Communicable Disease Department at 435-5850.

Sincerely,

Raymond Nicholson, MD
Executive Director
Vanderburgh County Health Department