

# PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO ALL PHYSICIANS AT THIS FAX LOCATION



Bulletin for Physicians  
Pandemic (H1N1) 2009

**Date:** October 14, 2009

**To:** All Alberta Physicians

**From:** Dr. David Megran, Senior Physician Executive

**Re:** Establishment and Management of Influenza Assessment Centres (IACs)

## Purpose of Influenza Assessment Centres (IACs):

- To provide timely and accessible clinical assessment and treatment services for patients with mild to moderate influenza-like illness (ILI) symptoms. Management will be limited to anti-viral treatment (if indicated); administration of supportive therapy (antipyretics, antiemetics, etc.), and self care advice.

## Key points:

- IACs will be initiated at the direction of the Alberta Health Services (AHS) Emergency Coordinating Centre, in collaboration with Zone Emergency Operations Centres. The decision to open one or more IACs will be made when the demand for services by people presenting with ILI begins to overwhelm the capacity of community and hospital providers and / or facilities.
- Public communications and Health Link will direct people with ILI who require assessment or care to either their family physician or to an IAC in their community or Zone.
- Patients with ILI may access care (if needed) through their family doctor, or an IAC in their area. If they have co-existing chronic diseases, they will be encouraged to see their family doctor if at all possible. Persons with mild to moderate ILI will be discouraged from presenting to acute care Emergency Departments.
- Emergency Departments will have the option of triaging patients to the IAC.
- IACs will **only** assess and manage patients with ILI. Persons with other health concerns will be redirected to other health facilities.
- IAC sites with appropriate resources are currently being identified in each Zone.
- IACs will *not* routinely provide diagnostic imaging or laboratory services on site.
- IACs will be open from 16 to 24 hours per day depending on the demand.
- IACs in each Zone would be opened on an as-needed basis.
- Staffing will be ensured through redeployment, recruitment and volunteerism. Staffing levels will be increased as required. Family physicians are being recruited; other physicians may be re-deployed.
- Antiviral medication will be available on site in the IACs for administration when needed.

## Steps in process:

1. Patients will be screened for ILI.
2. If ILI is thought to be present, an initial assessment will be carried out to determine disposition:
  - a) home with teaching +/- antiviral therapy
  - b) secondary assessment by a physician or nurse practitioner.
3. Secondary assessment will determine disposition.
  - a) home with teaching +/- antiviral therapy
  - b) short term observation and symptomatic treatment (<2hrs)
  - c) transfer to an Emergency Department if admission criteria met

## More Information:

<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/660.asp> or [racc.operations@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:racc.operations@albertahealthservices.ca)