



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Washtenaw County Public Health Confirms Two Adult Influenza-Related Deaths *Both had Severe Underlying Health Conditions*

YPSILANTI, Mich., Jan 10, 2014 – Health officials are saddened to report the first local influenza-related deaths of the current flu season. Both individuals were over age 65 and had severe underlying health conditions. Last year there were 199 hospitalizations and 8 influenza-related deaths among Washtenaw County residents. Seasonal flu vaccination is strongly recommended for everyone six months and older and provides the best protection against severe illness.

“We extend our condolences to the families and friends of these individuals,” says Ellen Rabinowitz, Acting Health Officer for Washtenaw County Public Health.

Reports of flu-related hospitalizations remain high locally. Compared with last flu season, a greater proportion of hospitalized Washtenaw County residents are between the ages of 18 to 49 years (37% this season and 13% last). The younger age of hospitalized individuals is more consistent with the 2009-2010 flu season when H1N1 first circulated widely. Few hospitalizations have occurred to date among children (0 to 17 years). For details on Washtenaw County flu activity, visit:

http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/public_health/disease_control/ph_flusurve_illness.html

Most confirmed cases have the H1N1 strain, which is included in the current seasonal flu vaccine. Many area health care providers, hospitals and local Public Health are reporting ample flu vaccine supplies. Some local pharmacies are reportedly running out, and residents may want to call ahead before seeking a flu vaccine at pharmacy.

Washtenaw County Public Health promotes health and works to prevent disease or injury in our community. This includes monitoring communicable diseases, such as flu. For more information, please visit <http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org>, or call us at 734-544-6700. Public Health is located at 555 Towner Street in Ypsilanti.

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