TO: Halton Physicians  
Medical Chiefs of Staff: Joseph Brant Hospital, Halton Healthcare (Oakville, Milton and Georgetown Hospitals)  
Chairs of: Family Practice, Paediatrics, Internal Medicine, Emergency, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Surgery  
Chief of Laboratory Services and Infection Control Practitioners  
Halton Midwives

POST IN: Emergency Department and Physicians Lounge

FROM: Dr. Joanna Oda, Associate Medical Officer of Health

DATE: November 4, 2019

RE: Information for Influenza season

QUICK FACTS

- Influenza vaccination can now be offered to all persons 6 months of age and older.
- The Health Department’s stock of high-dose trivalent vaccine has been fully distributed. Additional doses are not expected until late-November to early-December.
- Influenza activity is currently low in Halton and Ontario. Influenza A (H3N2) is currently the most common strain in Canada.

KEY MESSAGES FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

- Encourage everyone to receive influenza vaccination, especially those at high-risk for complications.
- For persons over 65 years old, offer influenza vaccine with either high-dose trivalent or standard-dose quadrivalent vaccine based on availability. Do not delay vaccination. There is no preferential recommendation for this age group.
- Public Health Ontario provides Guidelines for the use of antivirals for suspected and confirmed influenza and the management of outbreaks.
- When influenza is circulating, don’t wait for a positive influenza test before starting treatment for patients with severe acute respiratory illness (requiring hospitalization) or at high-risk for complications.

KEY MESSAGES FOR PATIENTS

- It is important to get vaccinated against influenza, especially if you’re at high-risk for complications.
- It is more important to get vaccinated early in the flu season with any vaccine that is available than to wait for a specific vaccine.

RESOURCES

- Sign up online for Halton’s Weekly Influenza Activity Report starting in November.

Please report all suspected or confirmed cases of Diseases of Public Health Significance (formerly Reportable Diseases) to the Halton Region Health Department as soon as possible. Diseases marked * should be reported immediately by telephone (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) or fax (Mon-Fri, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm only). Other diseases can be reported the next working day. Call 311, 905-825-6000 or toll free at 1-866-442-5866. For general information, please visit halton.ca.

If you can’t access hyperlinks, please sign-up for electronic updates by emailing doctors@halton.ca