

22 August 2018

## Influenza outbreaks occurring in ECCs

In the last week Regional Public Health has been notified of influenza outbreaks in a number of schools and early child education centres in the greater Wellington region.

The symptoms of influenza are fever, cough and sometimes vomiting or diarrhoea in younger children. Influenza spreads quickly in schools and 20-30% absenteeism is not uncommon.

**PLEASE SHARE THE ATTACHED INFLUENZA INFORMATION (PAGE 2) WITH PARENTS.**

If you suspect an outbreak of influenza-like illness at your centre:

1. **Notify Regional Public Health of possible outbreak** (an outbreak is defined as: Three or more cases (staff or child) exhibiting symptoms of illness in 48 hours or 15% of the centre unwell). Phone 04 570 9002 as soon as possible if you suspect your facility has an outbreak.
2. Refer to our [www.healthyecc.org.nz](http://www.healthyecc.org.nz) – Current illnesses – Influenza for actions to take if you think you have an outbreak of influenza.

If you have any queries relating to this letter please contact Regional Public Health on 04 570 9002 and ask to speak with the early childhood team.

Ngā mihi

Dr Annette Nesdale  
Medical Officer of Health



## Information for parents

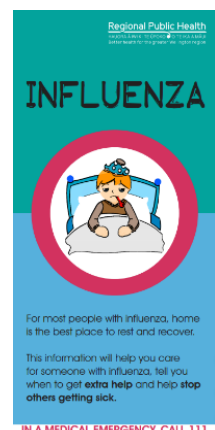
### Influenza outbreaks in ECCs in the greater Wellington region

Several schools and early child education centres (ECCs) in the Wellington region currently have an influenza outbreak.

The main symptoms of influenza are fever, cough and sometimes vomiting or diarrhoea in younger children. These symptoms usually last 3-4 days but can be up to 7 days.

The following information will help reduce the spread of influenza and assist your ECC:

1. Advise a member of staff if your child has an illness as described above.
2. Check that your ECC has your correct and up-to-date contact details in case they need to contact you.
3. Keep sick children at home until feeling well and free from symptoms (usually 3-4 days but up to 7 days). Sick children and staff should not be at social or sporting events. This is so they can rest and recover and don't spread illness to others.
4. It is important to use tissues to cover coughs and sneezes and to be very good about washing and drying hands thoroughly. An [influenza brochure](http://www.rph.org.nz/influenza) accessible at [www.rph.org.nz/influenza](http://www.rph.org.nz/influenza) has some good tips for looking after people with influenza and stopping it spreading to other people at home.
5. If anyone in your family has influenza we ask that they don't visit hospitals or community care homes or see people who may be at high risk of serious illness, such as pregnant women, young babies, or anyone who has cancer, lung, and heart or kidney conditions.



**If you are worried about your child's symptoms or they have long-term health problems (e.g. asthma, diabetes, kidney, heart or immunity problems), then you should phone their usual doctor or Healthline 0800 611 116 for further advice. Otherwise they should recover at home and see their GP only if the illness gets worse or is not improving.**

Ngā mihi nui

Dr Annette Nesdale, Medical Officer of Health  
Regional Public Health