



Circular 0007/2011

To
BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT OF PRIMARY AND POST-PRIMARY
SCHOOLS AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OF VOCATIONAL
EDUCATION COMMITTEES

Public Health Advice to Schools from the Health Service Executive on the Seasonal Influenza

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has advised the Department of Education and Skills that this winter the predominant flu virus is the H1N1 virus, more commonly known as *swine flu*. The HSE is currently experiencing a rise in people attending GPs and GP out of hours services with flu like illnesses.

The HSE has asked this Department to bring its public health information on the prevention of influenza (including the H1N1 virus) within the school setting to the attention of all schools, colleges and centres of education.

This HSE information is available through the website of the Health Protection Surveillance Centre of the HSE at www.hpsc.ie. Links to this site and other relevant HSE websites are also provided through this Department's website www.education.ie and can be accessed through the **Public Health Alerts** option on the home page.

Any updates and/or further advice by the HSE to the school sector on the prevention of this seasonal flu in this sector will be available through these web links. School authorities are therefore advised to regularly monitor the HSE's public health information for the school sector through these web links. In the event of a school/college experiencing a cluster of Influenza like illnesses the school/college should seek advice from their local Department of Public Health of the HSE.

The Minister strongly encourages schools to continue co-operating with the HSE on this important public health issue.

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