

Impact of Human Swine Flu management on Queensland early childhood education and care services.

You may have heard recent media reports that national authorities have moved to a new “protect” response phase to manage the outbreak of H1N1 Influenza A (also known as Human Swine Influenza) in Australia.

Queensland’s Deputy Premier and Health Minister Paul Lucas said Queensland would move to the new protect phase from next Monday (June 22) but would keep its policy of school exclusions and school closures in place until the end of term next Friday (June 26).

Queensland Health has advised that early childhood education and care services in Queensland would also be asked to implement these restrictions until 26 June.

Queensland’s Chief Health Officer Dr Jeannette Young said the extra week of possible service closures followed by school holidays provided a circuit breaker, further lessening the spread and the potential impacts to the Queensland community.

Dr Young has advised that Queensland’s efforts to restrict the spread of H1N1 Influenza A have been very effective and will continue until 26 June.

It means that until Friday 26 June our service will:

- Continue to be prepared to act quickly to close the service to children if advised to do so by Queensland Health.
- Continue the current guidelines for seven-day timeout for any children returning to Queensland from areas of concern, including Victoria, until 26 June.

Because the seven-day timeout guidelines for children end on 26 June, there will be no restrictions on children entering Queensland from areas of concern including Mexico, the United States of America, Canada, Panama, Japan, Chile and Argentina or Victoria after that date.

For further information please contact the service or visit the Office for Early Childhood Education and Care website at www.education.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood

For further information about H1N1 Influenza A (Human Swine Influenza) contact 13 HEALTH or visit www.health.qld.gov.au/swineflu

The Office for Early Childhood Education and Care is working closely with Queensland Health and will continue to be guided by the advice provided by their medical experts in relation to any situations where action by services would benefit the service and broader community.