

Dear Families and Guardians

I am writing to provide you with updated as the ACT moves to the new PROTECT Response Phase to H1N1 (Human Swine Influenza).

Disability ACT recognises the importance of the respite service to families and those who attend and we are working with ACT Health to ensure the least possible disruption to the service. We also have a duty of care to those who attend respite and may, in some circumstances, be required to limit access for some.

The actions below have been developed with ACT Health and relate specifically to our respite service.

Where a person has a confirmed diagnosis of Human Swine Influenza they will be asked to remain at home and cannot attend Respite until cleared to by their treating medical practitioner.

When a person immediately prior to their respite visit demonstrates influenza like symptoms, they will be asked to provide a doctor's certificate confirming they are cleared to attend respite. The basic symptoms for Human Swine Influenza are similar to the normal human seasonal flu and may include:

- \* Fever (greater than 38°C)
- \* Sore throat
- \* Cough
- \* Stuffy nose
- \* Chills
- \* Headache and body aches
- \* Fatigue

When a person demonstrates influenza like symptoms during their stay, they will need to return home until they provide a doctor's certificate confirming they are cleared to attend Respite.

Families and guardians are requested to consider the wellbeing of other visitors and not use the respite service if their family member with a disability has been in direct contact with anyone diagnosed with Human Swine Influenza.

Adults are potentially contagious for about 24 hours before, and up to 7 days after they become unwell. Children may be contagious for up to 10 days.

Respite staff have been reminded about their obligation to continue to use standard hygiene practices and to be especially vigilant in monitoring, their own and clients, cold or flu like symptoms.

For further information, please call the 24 hour health advice line *healthdirect* on 1800 022 222. Callers will be directed to the nearest influenza assessment centre where clinically necessary. Your local doctor will, of course, continue to manage symptomatic people who choose to go to their surgeries. Further information is also available on the ACT Health website: [www.health.act.gov.au](http://www.health.act.gov.au)

If you require specific information in relation to your family member or their attendance at Disability ACT's respite service please contact the service co-ordinator, Ms Jenni Bloomfield directly.

Yours sincerely

Sarah King  
Senior Manager  
Individual Response Team  
Disability ACT

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cc. Office of the Public Advocate