

TO : Public Health Officials and Others Concerned  
With Influenza

July 9, 1957

FROM : Chief, Communicable Disease Center

SUBJECT: Communicable Disease Center Influenza Report and  
Reporting System

As Far East strains of influenza virus spread world wide, the rapid distribution of pertinent information is of major importance. The impressive forewarning provided by alert investigators in the present situation is remarkable and every advantage should be taken to maintain this lead.

An effective reporting system through the National Office of Vital Statistics is now in operation. More frequent reports would greatly benefit those presently engaged in influenza activities. Consequently, the Communicable Disease Center plans to distribute at frequent intervals an "Influenza Report" which will contain pertinent laboratory information and epidemiologic data relative to recent events.

Dr. Keith E. Kensen, CDC Virus and Rickettsia Section, Montgomery, Alabama, and Dr. Robert H. Drachman, Influenza Surveillance Unit, Communicable Disease Center, Atlanta, Georgia, will prepare jointly the "CDC Influenza Report". This will cover investigations of outbreaks with specific laboratory results and information on diagnostic techniques and reagents. Vaccine production and testing will also be included when available.

These reports will be sent to State and Territorial Health Officers and Epidemiologists, all laboratories collaborating with the Influenza Center, and others involved in influenza activities. Because of its provisional nature, information contained in the Reports will not be for public release. Individual states, of course, will judge the advisability of releasing their own data.

Requests for influenza diagnostic reagents and related inquiries should be directed to Dr. Jensen. Reports, corrections and comments on investigations of outbreaks shall be addressed to Dr. Drachman.

Epidemic Intelligence Service Officers can be called upon to assist in the investigation of outbreaks and the collection of specimens.

Objectives of this rapid reporting system are as follows:

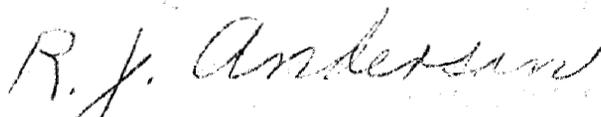
1. To identify seriously handicapped high morbidity areas.
2. To maintain continued vigilance for the appearance of new antigenic strains of influenza virus which may differ from the present Far East strains.

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3. To appraise evidence suggesting an increased virulence of the influenza virus without concomitant antigenic change.
4. To accumulate epidemiological information relative to the movement of travelers from high incidence areas or from gatherings where outbreaks have occurred.
5. To assist in identification of areas where Far East strains have been isolated which may represent high incidence areas at a later date.
6. To identify unusual bacterial invaders accompanying influenza infection.

Reporting of influenza information should continue along previously defined channels. It is further requested that current reports be telephoned as soon as feasible to the Influenza Unit in Atlanta, TRinity 6-3311, extension 5455. Close contact will be maintained with the National Office of Vital Statistics so that both groups will have immediate access to current data on influenza.

Readily accessible, reasonably accurate and current data represent a major factor in the maintenance of an objective view towards the influenza situation. With this vital consideration in mind, we will make every effort to collaborate with you in the present undertaking.



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