

15 June 2009

## Flu clinics opened at Maroochydore, Mackay

Queensland Health has opened flu clinics at Maroochydore and Mackay – making a total of six to open in the State since the outbreak of H1N1 human swine influenza in late April.

Queensland's Chief Health Officer Dr Jeannette Young said the clinics will assess and treat people presenting with influenza like symptoms, though people can still call their GP or 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) before attending a clinic.

The Maroochydore clinic opened today at the Community Health Centre, 100 Sixth Ave, Maroochydore, to service the Sunshine Coast area and accommodate any increase in presentations of people with flu-like symptoms.

It is planned for the centre to open from 8.30am to 4pm until Wednesday, but this will be extended if demand warrants it.

The Mackay clinic at Mackay Base Hospital began operating today and will open from 8am to 4pm from Tuesday.

Dr Young said establishing a flu clinic is just one of the strategies hospitals can put in place in situations like these to maintain business continuity and relieve the pressure on Emergency Departments.

Queensland Health has also established flu clinics at Cairns Base and Gold Coast hospitals. Clinics were established in Warwick and Robina, but closed after the initial demand dropped off.

A general public health message from Queensland Health for both seasonal and H1N1 influenza says the best way for people to protect themselves and others is to:

- stay home when sick
- wash hands frequently with soap and water or use an alcohol based hand gel
- wash hands prior to touching eyes, nose and mouth
- when coughing or sneezing, cover mouth and nose with disposable tissues which should be disposed of immediately
- don't share items such as cigarettes, glasses or cups, lipstick, toys or anything which could be contaminated with respiratory secretions
- maintain at least one metre distance from people who have flu-like symptoms such as coughing or sneezing
- consult a doctor for a cough and fever; follow the doctor's instructions, including taking medicine as prescribed.

More information is on the Queensland Health website at <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/swineflu/>

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