



wash your hands

## Access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for H1N1 Influenza 09

Current 7 May 2009

**Use this procedure ONLY for patients meeting the current case definition for suspected Influenza A H1N1 infection. For seasonal influenza or patients not fitting the case definition, continue as per usual practice.**

The PPE required is dependent on the task. Refer to *Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Influenza: Advice for all healthcare facilities and the Tasmanian Ambulance Service*, available from [www.pandemic.tas.gov.au](http://www.pandemic.tas.gov.au) under the Health Sector Information tab.

Unless stipulated otherwise, PPE refers to a P2 (N95) mask, fluid-repellent gown, gloves and eye protection.

### Delay Phase

The Delay Phase is when no cases have been confirmed in Australia, and the focus is on delaying entry of the virus.

During the Delay Phase, PPE will be available to:

1. Healthcare professionals involved in the testing of suspected H1N1 Influenza 09.  
The process for testing suspected cases is stated in *Testing for H1N1 Influenza 09*. Deviance from the procedure outlined in that document - without approval by Public Health - will mean that PPE will not be supplied.
2. Staff of acute public hospitals and GP surgeries who are caring for suspected or confirmed cases of H1N1 Influenza 09 **where those cases have been notified to Public Health AND ongoing care / assessment is required.**
3. Patients with suspected or confirmed H1N1 Influenza 2009. Patients will be given surgical masks for use when travelling or being cared for by a GP.
4. Carers of patients with suspected / confirmed H1N1 Influenza 2009. Carers will be given surgical masks for close (within one metre) contact / care
5. Staff involved in border control as determined by the Public Health Emergency Operations Centre.

During the Delay Phase, PPE will be provided to patients and carers by Public Health.



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## Contain / Sustain Phase

When cases of H1N1 Influenza 09 have arrived in Australia, guidance on PPE access and use will be reviewed, taking into consideration the epidemiology, transmissibility and severity of illness caused by the virus at that time.

### Interim guidance

As per the *Australian Health Management Plan for Pandemic Influenza (2008)*, PPE from the National Medical Stockpile will be prioritised for frontline healthcare workers who:

- work in services that form part of the health sector response sanctioned by the State; AND
- provide direct clinical or personal care to suspected or confirmed cases; AND
- are considered to be at high risk of exposure to the influenza virus.

In Tasmania this will include:

- Health professionals working in flu clinics, emergency departments, ambulance services or hospitals caring for patients with influenza
- Health professionals working in testing facilities
- General Practitioners working in designated influenza services
- Community nursing staff providing services to patients in home quarantine
- Carers providing direct patient care for people with confirmed H1N1 Influenza 09.

### Access and Distribution

The Emergency Coordination Centre of the Department of Health and Human Services is developing a distribution mechanism to ensure PPE is available in a timely way to those who meet the criteria above.