



February 6, 2018

Dear Childcare Provider,

As you know, we are in the midst of an incredibly intense flu season. Influenza-like-illnesses are increasing not just in Delaware, but nationwide, and are at their highest levels when compared to the last five flu seasons. For the week ending January 27, 2018, there were 650 laboratory-confirmed influenza cases recorded. Lab-confirmed cases are just the tip of the iceberg as many families self-medicate and medical providers often do not conduct laboratory testing. Either way, this tells us that influenza is much more widespread in the community than our lab-reporting can confirm.

Children in the age ranges that you serve have been hit particularly hard this season. There have been 277 lab-confirmed cases of influenza this season to children ages birth to four, which is the highest number of flu cases of any age group this flu season. Add in other children who many centers serve before and/or after school, ages 5 – 13, and you will find an additional 376 cases. The population you serve is particularly at risk for spreading the influenza virus.

To help you protect your center, students and staff alike, we are providing the attached recommendations which you can post in your facility, and share with your staff. If you have any questions about this information, or influenza in general, please contact the Division of Public Health Office of Epidemiology at 302-744-4990. Thank you for all you do to protect and promote the health of the children and families in your communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Rattay MD MS".

Karyl T. Rattay, MD, MS
Director