

# JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Influenza Confirmed in Two Recent Middle-Aged Adult Deaths in Jefferson County

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The Jefferson County Public Health Service has been provided information indicating laboratory confirmed influenza in two Jefferson County residents who recently expired. This year, influenza is impacting middle aged and younger adults hard throughout New York State and the nation. The deceased in these two cases were between the ages of 40-55.

Only influenza-associated pediatric deaths are reportable to the local health department and New York State Department of Health. Every year, adults die of influenza or co-morbid complications from influenza. Influenza-associated adult deaths are not reportable. However, it is unusual that middle-aged persons would be so impacted, and with this heightened sensitivity, the Jefferson County Public Health Service has begun working with hospitals and other health care providers to track incidence in the County.

Low vaccination rates in middle aged and young adults is a big factor related to hospitalizations and deaths in this age group. The predominant strain of influenza this year is H1N1. Middle aged and young adults have less natural immunity for H1N1, and they have poor vaccination rates.

The Jefferson County Public Health Service encourages all residents to:

- **GET A FLU SHOT!** Vaccine is still plentiful in the community. Individuals can receive vaccine at the Jefferson County Public Health Service every-Wednesday Immunization Clinic (visit [www.jcphs.org](http://www.jcphs.org) to schedule an on-line appointment through the eHealth System or call 786-3720), at many local pharmacies, or at your primary care provider.
- Practice good respiratory and hygiene etiquette, including,
  - Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
  - Stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick.
  - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
  - Wash your hands often to help protect you from germs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.
  - Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work, or school, especially when someone is ill.

It is important to note that while influenza incidence is still considered widespread across New York State, weekly surveillance indicates activity is on the decline statewide. For the week ending February 15, 2014:

- Laboratory confirmed influenza reports declined 22% from the previous week.
- Patients admitted to hospitals with laboratory-confirmed influenza decreased 34% from the previous week.
- Statewide, there has been one influenza-associated pediatric death reported this season.

To obtain more information about influenza, please visit the following websites: Jefferson County Public Health Service at [www.jcphs.org](http://www.jcphs.org), the New York State Department of Health at [www.health.ny.gov](http://www.health.ny.gov), and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

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