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MEDIA RELEASE

The Community and Hospital Infection Control Association – Canada (CHICA-Canada) urges health care officials to recognize the importance of Canada’s Infection Prevention and Control Professionals (ICPs). ICPs play a key role in the control of infectious agents such as swine flu. They are a critical part of efforts to respond to this growing health threat. ICPs are experts at preventing the spread of infections and work with their local public health authorities as part of their daily responsibilities. Long term care facilities, home care providers, and other public institutions such as schools will need the guidance and support that ICPs can provide, such as advice and education on stopping the spread of infections.

The symptoms of swine flu in people are similar to the symptoms of regular human flu and include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have reported diarrhea and vomiting associated with swine flu. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

Cleaning your hands is the best way to stop the spread of infection. It decreases the number of germs on the surface of your skin, and can be done by either hand washing with soap and water, or by using an alcohol based hand rub on the hands.

Members of the public, including children, should:

- Clean their hands thoroughly and regularly.
- Cover their cough or sneezes with a tissue or their sleeve. Throw the tissue in the trash after they use it and clean their hands.
- Avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth. That is how germs spread.
- Stay home from work or school if sick and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- Follow the recommendations of their local public health unit

More information is available at http://www.chica.org/links_flu.html.

CHICA-Canada is a multidisciplinary professional association of persons professionally or occupationally concerned with the prevention and control of infections in all health care, community and public settings.

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