

HEALTH

ALERT

To: Infection Control – Crusader Community Health, Mercy Health Rockford Campus, St. Anthony's Medical Center, Physician Immediate Care, Rock River Valley Blood Center and SwedishAmerican Hospital; Emergency Preparedness Personnel; Emergency Department Directors; Infectious Disease Physicians, OB/GYN Physicians and Primary Care Physicians.

From: Todd M. Kisner, MPH - Director of the Center for Health Protection

Date: 30 January 2017

RE: **Testing travelers from China for H7N9 Influenza Virus**

The Health Department would like to bring to the attention of our Community Health Care Partners the existence of avian influenza A (H7N9) virus in China. The total number of cases since 2013 is 1,035 with 371 deaths. Most infected people have had exposure to poultry.

January 28, 2017, was the Chinese Lunar New Year, which is typically associated with increased travel to and from China. Health-care providers should consider H7N9 virus infection as a possible etiology among travelers returning from China with severe respiratory illness, especially if they have had exposure to poultry.

At this time, no cases of avian influenza A (H7N9) virus have been identified in Winnebago County.

Please promptly report and respiratory illness in persons returning from China by contacting the Health Department at 815-720-4050.

Specimen collection and shipment to the state public health laboratory can be arranged with the Health Department to help identify H7N9, or other novel influenza infections.

Please share this information with your Health Care Providers, Emergency Department, Laboratory and Clinical Staff.

Should you have any questions, please contact the Health Department at 815-720-4050.