



Date: February 6, 2018

To: Honorable Mayor Robert Garcia and Members of the City Council

From: Vice Mayor Rex Richardson, Ninth District *RR*
Councilmember Lena Gonzalez, First District *LA*
Councilmember Dee Andrews, Sixth District *DA*
Councilmember Roberto Uranga, Seventh District *(R)*

Subject: Long Beach Flu Season Status Update

RECOMMENDATION:

Respectfully request the City Council to receive and file a report from the Department of Health and Human Services on the status of the current flu levels in Long Beach and Southern California, detailing steps Long Beach residents can take to prevent contracting and spreading the illness.

Discussion

One of the biggest health threats facing us today is influenza. Amid what is being described as the worst flu season in a decade, this past week has been the deadliest and worst week of the 2017-2018 flu season for Californians, with Long Beach losing one of its own to the virus on January 23rd. Furthermore, as of January 25th, the California Department of Public Health (CDHP) reported 74 laboratory-confirmed influenza-associated deaths among patients under 65 years of age for this flu season.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicates that the primary flu strain this season is influenza A (H3N2). These viruses are often linked to more severe illness, especially among children and people age 65 and older. When H3 viruses are predominant, there tends to be a worse flu season with more hospitalizations and more deaths.

While the CDC surveillance systems show that nationally the flu season may be peaking now, past experience shows that it will take many more weeks for flu activity to truly slow down. Residents can reduce the risk of getting the flu through everyday good health habits like covering their mouths when they cough and frequently washing hands. Additionally, Long Beach City Health Officer, Anissa Davis, recommends that all Long Beach residents over the age of 6 months get the flu vaccine. Getting the flu vaccine can prevent people from getting sick, or may lessen the severity of symptoms for those who become ill.



The Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services (Health Department) continues to vaccinate residents during this severe flu season. Since October, nearly 3,500 vaccines have been given at 25 different flu vaccination clinics throughout the City, including a drive-through vaccination clinic. In addition, the Health Department has provided almost 3,000 doses of flu vaccine to clinics throughout Long Beach to distribute to their patients.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact for this report.