

# Influenza Season Preparation Lessons Learnt and Vaccination

# WHAT IS FLU ??

- The flu is a virus which affects the lungs , throat, nose and other parts of the body eg muscles and is spread by tiny droplets in the air.
- Characterised by sudden onset , high fever, headache
- May lead to complications requiring hospitalisation especially in the high risk groups (pneumonia and death)
- Approximately, 200-500 Irish people will die each year because of flu. In a bad year this can be up to 1000 people (2008-2009)\*

# Number of Confirmed Influenza Cases ERHA Week 40 2016/Week 20 2017

<b>Total</b>	1167
Males	481
Females	686
Under 65	703
Over 65	464
Total deaths	22
<b>No of outbreaks reported in:</b>	
Hospitals	5
LTC Facilities/Nursing Homes	21

# Background

## December 2016

- Department of Public Health East notified of a number of cases of Influenza Like Illness (ILI) and confirmed influenza.
- Viral swabs revealed predominately Influenza AH3.
- A number of outbreaks in Nursing Homes/LTC facilities began to be reported mid December.

# Background

- Poor staff uptake of seasonal influenza vaccine in general.
- Peer Vaccination programme unsuccessful.
- Influenza cases presented early for the season in December 2016 with the predominant strain AH3-

# Background contd.

- Some GPs slow to recognise influenza outbreaks, infections were mistaken for bacterial as opposed to viral.
- Swabs were not taken
- Pre-Christmas Tamiflu shortage.
- Vaccine efficacy in elderly population poor estimated 30 -50%.

# Lessons

- Have an Influenza Plan
  - Staff Vaccination –
  - Encourage those in risk groups to vaccinate.
  - Have equipment - order now
    - Swabs NVRL
  - Early swabbing for confirmation–
  - .Ensure risk groups are offered pneumococcal vaccination also. ( NIAC guidelines).
  - Keep a record of vaccination types and dates.

# HOW TO STOP SPREAD

- Wash your hands or use hand sanitisers, sneeze in your sleeve or a tissue.

**But this is not enough.....**

- People can still spread the flu even when they DON'T feel sick.
  - Up to 50% of infected people don't have symptoms when they are infected.
  - People can spread flu germs before they feel sick.
- The best protection is **VACCINATION**



# VACCINE FACTS !!!

- **Is there anyone who cannot get flu vaccine?**
- Most people can get flu vaccine.
- It is not recommended for those who have:
- a history of anaphylaxis following a previous dose of flu vaccine or any part of the vaccine.
  
- **What about people with egg allergy?**
- People with egg allergy can get seasonal flu vaccine. This may be given by your occupational health unit or GP or you may need referral to a hospital specialist. See RCPI NIAC guidelines
  
- ***INFLUENZA VACCINES ARE TRIVALENT , MEANING THEY CONTAIN 3 INFLUENZA STRAINS RECOMMENDED BY THE WHO.***

# Preparing for Flu season-Supplies

- Try to identify an isolation room/ area in your facility for possible cases of influenza
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Stock of viral swabs
- Posters/Signage



# Planning & Education

Induction and ongoing education for all staff. Staff should know:

1. Facts on influenza and influenza immunisation
2. Infection prevention and control policies/guidelines & protocols for Influenza outbreak. Standard and transmission and respiratory based precautions
3. Symptoms and signs of influenza infection
4. Exclusion criteria for ill staff

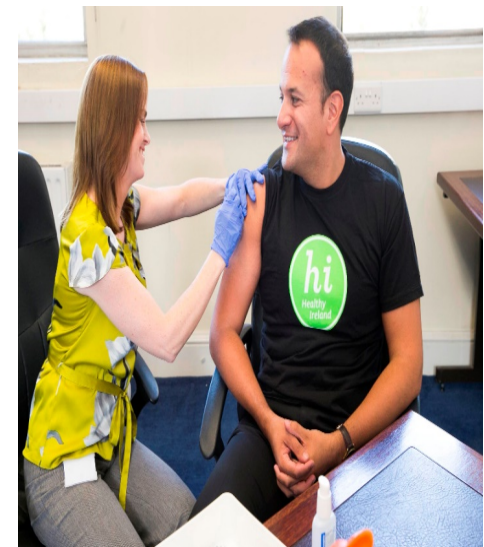
# Preparing for Flu season – Staff Vaccination

**Offer Influenza vaccination to all staff and record uptake**

Management should provide **feedback to staff** on flu vaccine coverage rates.

Symptomatic staff should not attend for work.  
**A written staff exclusion policy** is needed.

**Monitor staff absenteeism rates**  
more than expected staff absent from work?

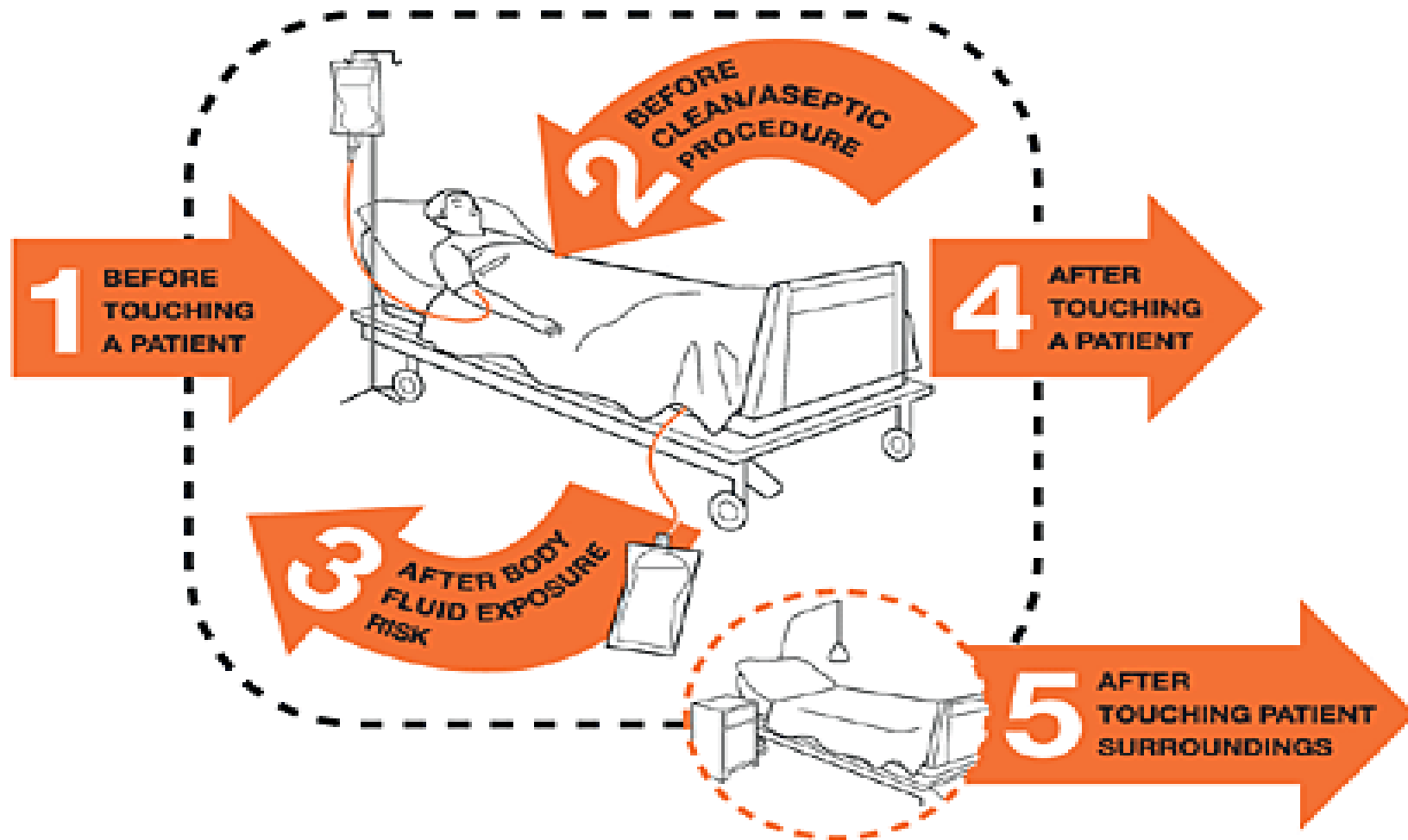


## About a Nurse



*“You all came down with the flu at the same time. Do you, by chance, all work together?”*

# 5 Moments of Hand Hygiene



# Useful Contact Numbers

**Department of Public Health**                      **01 635 2145**

**National Virus Reference Laboratory**   **01 716 4401**

**Patient Results**                      **01 716 4414**

**Health Promotion** (posters and  
leaflets)                                      [www.healthpromoti  
on.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie)

**Infection Prevention and Control  
Guidelines**                                      [http://www.hse.ie/e  
ng/about/Who/healthwellbeing/Infectco  
nt/](http://www.hse.ie/eng/about/Who/healthwellbeing/Infectcontrol/)