

Policies and Recommendations Regarding the Flu and H1N1 Influenza NCYC 2009 Kansas City

We have received some inquiries regarding plans for the 2009 National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) in light of the emergence of a pandemic of novel influenza A/H1N1.

At this time, there are no public health advisories in place that should lead groups not to attend NCYC. The NCYC Sponsor, the National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) will continue to monitor the situation as flu season approaches. Any changes to its plans will be announced on its websites, www.nfcym.org and <http://ncyc.nfcym.org>, and to registered group leaders and NFCYM member dioceses via email. Certainly, if we hear of any changes, we will notify all NCYC Group Leaders immediately.

Like seasonal flu, novel influenza A/H1N1 virus is thought to be spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

As the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and NFCYM cannot guarantee that all participants will follow the recommended precautions, it is **strongly recommended** that:

- All NCYC attendees **take advantage of vaccines for both seasonal and H1N1 influenza** as soon as they become available in their communities;
- Those who are concerned about their ability to attend NCYC **investigate and purchase trip cancellation insurance**;
- Those with underlying health concerns, pregnant women, and very small children not attend NCYC.

It is expected that:

- **Those who are ill will not attend NCYC** and adhere to the stipulations outlined below:
- Those who have been ill with influenza or an influenza-like illness should be fever free for the period prescribed by the CDC (currently 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication). If someone from your group has had a fever or flu-like symptoms even two (2) days before November 18th, he/she **will not be allowed** to attend NCYC (therefore, having trip insurance will come in very handy if this should happen!). Group Leaders must be vigilant about this as they are in the best position to know the situations of their individual group members; and
- Those who experience influenza-like symptoms while at NCYC immediately identify themselves to their group leaders and be quarantined at their hotel.

NFCYM will remind attendees during NCYC through verbal announcements and signage that the best way to avoid infection is to wash their hands frequently and to cough or sneeze into their upper arm to help to contain the spread of germs. NFCYM must rely on its NCYC group leaders and attendees to assist in curbing the spread of novel influenza A/H1N1 virus by taking these simple steps.

Further information on the novel influenza A/H1N1 and precautions to avoid infection are outlined on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>.

Tips for Keeping NCYC Pilgrims Healthy Before and During NCYC

Group Leaders are responsible for disseminating this information to their group members. Please communicate the importance of healthy hygiene to all your NCYC group members. Some helpful tips that ALL should be aware of:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water or an alcohol based hand sanitizer (should be at least **60%** alcohol).

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Put used tissues in a waste basket.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve if you don't have a tissue (**not** into your hands).
- Clean your hands after coughing or sneezing. Use soap and water or an alcohol based hand cleaner.
- Stay at home if you have any flu-like symptoms. If you get sick while at NCYC, please tell your group leader immediately. Anyone who gets sick during NCYC will remain in the hotel.
- If you have a fever (above 100° F), stay home/hotel for at least 24 hrs **after** the fever has ended (without the use of fever reducing medications).
- Avoid sharing drinks, food, snacks or candies out of the same bag or which are unwrapped, and make-up (especially lipstick/gloss)

Also, each Group Leader should bring a **First Aid Kit** with them along with some other important items for caring for group members who are experiencing flu-like symptoms. Be sure you have sufficient medical supplies on hand to assess and protect yourself and others from the flu in your group:

- Thermometers and a generous supply of disposable thermometer probe covers
- face masks for caretakers
- protective gloves
- acetaminophen
- ibuprofen
- alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol)
- alcohol-based swabs.

If Any of Your NCYC Group Members Becomes Sick During NCYC

1. In consultation with the medical coordinator, The Archdiocese of Cincinnati Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry is developing a proactive response plan to be implemented if/when someone is suspected of illness. We will announce the plan via email by November 1, 2009. It will include
 - A communications plan: who to notify;
 - A quarantine plan (which may require shuffling or acquisition of additional hotel rooms);
 - A staffing and transportation plan for attending to the sick.
2. **Group Leaders are responsible for caring for any group members if they become ill during NCYC.** Please remember that the *Archdiocese of Cincinnati Decree on Child Protection* requires that two (2) adults must be in attendance at all times, even if only one minor remains behind at the hotel.
3. Group members (youth and adults) will be required to remain at the hotel if they become sick and/or display any flu-like symptoms. No exceptions.
4. Group Leaders and other adult chaperones (other than the parent or guardian of the minor) **are not allowed** to administer any over-the-counter (OTC) medications (such as Tylenol, Advil, Benadryl, Pepto Bismol, etc.) **without written consent** of the minor's parent or guardian, even if the minor is in possession of the OTC and asks you to give it to her/him. A completed and signed Permission Form for Administering Over-the-Counter Medications is necessary. Group Leaders will keep this form with them at all times. Again, no adult (other than the parent/guardian of the minor) may administer any OTC medications without this written consent.

For More Information on H1N1 Flu

Further information on the novel influenza A/H1N1 and precautions to avoid infection are outlined on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>.