



**NAMDS**  
National Association for  
Medical Deputising

**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **POTENTIAL SWINE FLU PANDEMIC**

### **AFTER HOURS HOME VISITING DOCTORS ANNOUNCE PHASE 1 ALERT**

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2009

NAMDS, the National Association for Medical Deputising, today announced that it had finalised its response in the event of a declaration of a pandemic for H1N1 Influenza 09 (Swine flu) in Australia.

NAMDS President Stuart Tait said that “the consensus view of the NAMDS Medical Directors is that Swine flu is established in the community and its rapid spread, Australia wide, is now probable.”

“NAMDS Medical Directors estimate that in excess of 2,000,000 Australians could be infected with Swine flu by October 2009.”

Medical Deputising Services in Australia provide home visits by doctors to patients after hours, on weekends and on public holidays on behalf of the GPs who engage their services.

Mr Tait said that “to date, the approach to contain the spread of the virus has been to isolate confirmed and suspected cases at home. NAMDS members are ideally placed to care for these home isolation cases, as all members offer home visiting services to patients residences and aged care facilities.

NAMDS members have activated a Phase 1 Alert, which involves ensuring all after hours doctors receive the Australian Government Interim National Pandemic Influenza Guidelines and subsequent updates as they are released. All doctors have also been briefed on the World Health Organisation infection control guidelines.

In addition, all after hours doctors and staff have been briefed on basic precautions concerning dealing with patients who are reasonably suspected of having the Swine flu virus.

NAMDS has also asked the Commonwealth Government for urgent access to supplies of personal protective equipment and anti-viral medication sufficient to protect after hours Doctors, chaperones and staff.

“Protecting our day-time and after hours frontline doctors and staff is our first priority,” Mr Tait said. “We are working closely with the Commonwealth Government to ensure that our doctors are able to provide best practice care to Swine flu patients in their homes.”

At present, all NAMDS member services send a report to the regular day-time doctor of any after hours patient they see, providing information on diagnoses, treatment and tests ordered. These will now be upgraded so that day-time doctors are alerted to suspected cases of Swine flu. This will help day-time GPs and their staff take precautionary measures to protect themselves, their staff and patients who may be present in waiting rooms when Swine flu patients present for day-time care.

NAMDS members cover most of metropolitan Australia and provide after hours medical treatment in the home on behalf of over 6,500 GPs and care for over 750,000 patients each year.

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