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Denton County Reports Pediatric Influenza-Associated Death

March 25, 2019 – Denton County Public Health (DCPH) is reporting the first pediatric influenza-associated death in Denton County for the 2018-2019 flu season. While adult flu deaths are not required to be reported to the local health department, influenza-associated deaths of children ages 0 – 18 are a mandatory reportable condition. To protect confidentiality, no further identifying information will be released.

“Losing a child in our community to influenza is incredibly difficult, and this family remains in our thoughts. We continue to see flu activity within Denton County, and flu is certainly still a risk. We want to remind residents to keep washing your hands, covering coughs and sneezes, and stay home if you are sick to best protect yourself and others,” states Dr. Matt Richardson, DCPH Director.

DCPH recommends a three-pronged approach to fighting the flu:

1. **Get vaccinated.** The best way to protect yourself and your family from the flu is to get an annual flu shot, and the flu vaccination is recommended for everyone 6 months and older.
2. **Remember that antiviral medications are a second-line defense against the flu.** If you are experiencing fever, runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, cough, muscle aches and headaches, visit your doctor immediately, and take antivirals if prescribed. These remedies can help you recover quicker, and can potentially prevent you from being hospitalized with flu complications.
3. **Take everyday preventive actions to help stop the spread of germs.** Cover your cough and sneeze, avoid people experiencing flu symptoms, stay home when you feel sick and wash your hands often. These steps will also help prevent other respiratory viruses, including influenza, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and rhinovirus.

Weekly Denton County flu surveillance reports and additional information can be found at www.DentonCounty.com/flu. Visit www.cdc.gov/flu for details about symptoms, treatment, and prevention, and search www.vaccinefinder.org to find the nearest vaccine in your neighborhood.

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