



SAN MATEO COUNTY
HEALTH SYSTEM

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

December 3, 2012

To: San Mateo County Acute Care and Long Term Care Facilities

From: San Mateo County Public Health Division, Communicable Disease Control

Main number 650-573-2346 ♦ fax 650-573-2919 ♦ after-hours emergency line 650-363-4981

Norovirus Alert – New Strain in United States

Currently, a norovirus GII.4 virus strain not previously identified in the United States (US) has been circulating in Australia. It has been associated with up to 84% of the strains typed in South Australia, 94% of the outbreaks in New Zealand and has replaced the GII.4 New Orleans (2009) variant in these countries. **This virus has reached the US and has caused 14% of all reported norovirus outbreaks in the last three months.**

It is important that acute care health facilities (ACHF) and long-term care facilities (LTCF) report all outbreaks and be prepared to institute infection control measures quickly. **Outbreaks, suspected or confirmed, should be reported immediately to San Mateo County Communicable Disease Control and CDPH Licensing & Certification Division.** Additionally, we strongly recommend that facilities submit specimens from suspected norovirus outbreaks for testing so that this new virus can continue to be tracked.

Guidance for controlling suspected and confirmed Norovirus outbreaks in ACHF and LTCF is available from CDPH <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/pubsforms/Guidelines/Documents/PCofViralGastroenteritisOutbreaks.pdf> and CDC <http://www.cdc.gov/hicpac/pdf/norovirus/Norovirus-Guideline-2011.pdf>.

How to report: Monday through Friday, 8 am to 5 pm, call Communicable Disease Control, (650) 573-2346; after hours, weekends and holidays, call San Mateo County Dispatch, (650) 363-4981 and ask to speak to the on-call Health Officer.

Submitting specimens: Stool or vomitus specimens may be submitted in a sterile container to San Mateo County Public Health Laboratory, 225 W. 37th Avenue, Rm. 113, San Mateo, CA 94403. Questions regarding collection, storage and transport may be directed to the Public Health Laboratory, (650) 573-2500.

The Communicable Disease Program is available to help meet the reporting needs of, and answer questions for, San Mateo County providers. To report a disease or outbreak, please call 650-573-2346 Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, or fax a Confidential Morbidity Report (CMR) to 650-573-2919. You may download an electronic copy of the CMR at http://smhealth.org/sites/default/files/docs/PHS/cmr_cd_std.pdf. Web-based reporting via CalREDIE is also available. Please contact us if you would like to know more about, and sign up for, web-based reporting. Non-urgent questions and/or general enquiries may be directed to PH_CDControlUnit@smcgov.org.

Categories of urgency levels:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate attention.