



**Board of
Trustees 2009**

President

*Mark E. Rupp, MD
University of Nebraska Medical Center*

President-Elect

*Neil O. Fishman, MD
University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine*

Vice-President

*Steven M. Gordon, MD
Cleveland Clinic Foundation*

Secretary

*John A. Jernigan, MD, MS
Emory University School of Medicine and
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

Treasurer

*James P. Steinberg, MD
Emory University School of Medicine*

Past President

*Patrick J. Brennan, MD
University of Pennsylvania Health System*

Councilors

*Raymond Y. Chinn, MD
Sharp Metropolitan Medical Campus*

*Sara E. Cosgrove, MD
Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions*

*Connie S. Price, MD
University of Colorado Health Sciences Center*

*David K. Warren, MD
Washington University School of Medicine*

International Councilor

*Paul A. Tambyah, MBBS
National University of Singapore*

Executive Director

Jennifer L. Bright, MPA

June 11, 2009

Thomas Frieden, MD, MPH
Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30333

Dear Dr. Frieden:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA), representing over 1,400 physicians and other professionals who direct infection prevention and control programs in our nation's healthcare facilities. Since the emergence of the novel H1N1 influenza strain, our primary goal has been to ensure effective and sustainable delivery of patient care while protecting healthcare workers and patients from influenza acquisition in patient care settings.

SHEA has developed the enclosed position statement on CDC's Interim Guidance on Infection Control Precautions for Novel Swine-Origin Influenza A H1N1 in Healthcare Facilities, which has been endorsed by the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) and the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC). We hope that this document will contribute an important perspective on the scientific evidence as the CDC works to provide information to help healthcare providers, public health officials and the public address the challenges posed by the new virus.

SHEA endorsed CDC's initial recommendations on H1N1 as being consistent with evidence available at the time and reflective of an appropriately cautious approach to containment in the initial weeks of the outbreak. As the outbreak has evolved, additional knowledge and experience concerning the transmission dynamics and severity of the H1N1 outbreak has emerged. Given these circumstances, infection prevention and control guidance can and should be amended to provide effective protection of healthcare workers and their patients.

It is SHEA's belief that current evidence supports handling H1N1 on the basis of droplet transmission consistent with recommended precautions for seasonal influenza. Moreover, we support recommendations for enhanced respiratory protection when aerosol-generating procedures are performed on patients with suspected or confirmed H1N1. While the current H1N1 strain is behaving like seasonal influenza, this could change and vigilant monitoring is warranted throughout the summer and fall. If further evidence suggests that the transmission dynamics of the virus are changing, the current interim recommendations should be re-evaluated and updated accordingly.

SHEA welcomes and appreciates the opportunity to be part of the ongoing dialogue on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Rupp', with a large, looping flourish at the end.

Mark E. Rupp, MD
SHEA President

cc: Mark Leasure (IDSA)
Kathy Warye (APIC)