

## I. Purpose

- A. Geary Community Hospital recognizes the importance of individual immunity in preventing the spread of disease. It also recognizes that GCH Healthcare workers are at risk for acquiring and transmitting illnesses which can result in loss of work, disability and even death in some cases. To accomplish this and as a condition of employment, all GCH Healthcare workers will be required to receive the annual influenza vaccine or wear a modified name badge and surgical mask

## II. Definition

- A. Healthcare worker is defined as all persons whose occupation involve contact with patients or contaminated material in healthcare, home health, clinic or laboratory setting. GCH Healthcare worker will include:
1. GCH Employees- clinical and non-clinical
  2. Volunteers- GCH auxiliary members and hospice volunteers.
  3. Students- all students who have direct patient contact or who may enter a patient care area to include nursing, medical, diagnostic imaging, lab, surgery, and EMT's.
  4. Contractor/Vendor/Agencies- Security, OR equipment reps, and including but not limited to contracted agency staff.
  5. Organized professional staff members- GCH Medical staff. Allied health to include but not limited to anesthesia, PT/OT/Speech services, and contracted medical providers and their staff..
- B. Patient care areas are defined as any area within GCH owned or rented space.
- C. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC, defines the seasonal influenza season to be from Oct 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup> of every year.

## III. Procedure

- A. GCH healthcare worker must receive the influenza vaccine provided by GCH Occupational health Services or provide written proof of receipt of required influenza vaccine from another source. Vaccine received from a source other than GCH will not be reimbursed to the GCH healthcare worker. Immunization or proof of immunization must be completed annually.

- B. Newly hired GCH healthcare workers will be required to present proof of immunization, or will be given the influenza vaccine at their health screening if hire date is between October 1st-March 31st. Newly hired GCH healthcare workers hired outside of the months when influenza vaccine is available will be notified of the policy and will be required to comply with vaccination the next influenza season.
- C. Compliance with mandatory influenza vaccination will be required. GCH healthcare workers who do not receive the recommended vaccine within 20 days after the first day the influenza vaccine is offered, the healthcare worker will receive a written warning from their supervisor, which will be placed in their employment file.
- D. If the healthcare worker has not received their vaccine within 30 days after the first day the vaccine is offered to their department, the GCH healthcare worker will not be allowed to work if there's no record of receiving the vaccine. A signed form by healthcare workers primary physician designating the healthcare workers ineligibility to receive the vaccine would be the only acceptable reason.
- E. A GCH healthcare worker will be ineligible to receive the Inactivated Influenza vaccine for reasons to include:
1. History of Guillain-Barre' Syndrome
  2. Severe allergy to eggs
  3. Temporary unavailability of thimerosal free vaccine for thimerosal allergic healthcare worker.
- F. A GCH healthcare worker will be ineligible to receive the Live, Attenuated Influenza vaccine(nasal spray) for reasons to include:
1. History of Guillain-Barre' Syndrome
  2. Server allergy to eggs
  3. Adults 50 years of age or older
  4. On long term aspirin treatment
  5. Pregnant women
  6. Person with asthma
  7. Adults who have immunosuppression(medication or disease related)

8. Adults who have chronic pulmonary, cardiovascular, neurologic/neuromuscular, hematologic or metabolic disorders, and some urological disorders.
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- G. If a GCH healthcare worker has a contraindication but still desires to get the influenza vaccine, they should discuss it with their primary care provider.
  - H. GCH healthcare workers with allergy to eggs, see Figure 2 Recommendations regarding influenza vaccination-Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices(ACIP), 2011-2012 influenza season\*
  - I. A completed vaccine consent form must be filled out for each healthcare worker.
  - J. If a GCH healthcare worker refuses the influenza vaccine, a declination form must be filled out completely, the reason for refusal, and signed by the GCH healthcare worker. Refusals will be monitored in attempt to improve education to GCH healthcare workers and increase influenza vaccination.
  - K. GCH healthcare worker, who chooses not to receive the influenza vaccine or is contraindicated due to allergy, will be required to wear a modified name badge and a surgical facemask at all times within GCH facilities during the CDC defined influenza season.
  - L. Monitoring compliance with the Influenza policy will be done by Department/Unit Manager, Safety and Infection Control.
  - M. Tracking compliance rates will be done by Occupational Health Services.
  - N. If a GCH healthcare worker has medical exemption/declination for the influenza vaccine and is not in compliance with wearing a surgical facemask at all times with the exception of scheduled breaks:
    1. First offense-The GCH healthcare worker will receive written warning from the Department Manager that they are not in compliance with the GCH Influenza Policy.
    2. Second offense- The GCH healthcare worker will have disciplinary action taken by the personnel's supervisor, and may include termination.

#### IV. Contingency Plan

- A. If there should be a shortage of the influenza vaccine that affects the supply for GCH healthcare workers use, Administration will develop a contingency plan. CDC, Centers for Disease Control and GCH Pandemic Influenza plan may be utilized for prioritization of available influenza vaccine.
- B. In the event of an Influenza vaccine shortage or delay, Administration will communicate with the GCH healthcare worker concerning Influenza vaccination policy and surgical facemask compliance.

#### Resources:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Vaccine Information Statement, Live, Attenuated Influenza Vaccine 7/26/2011

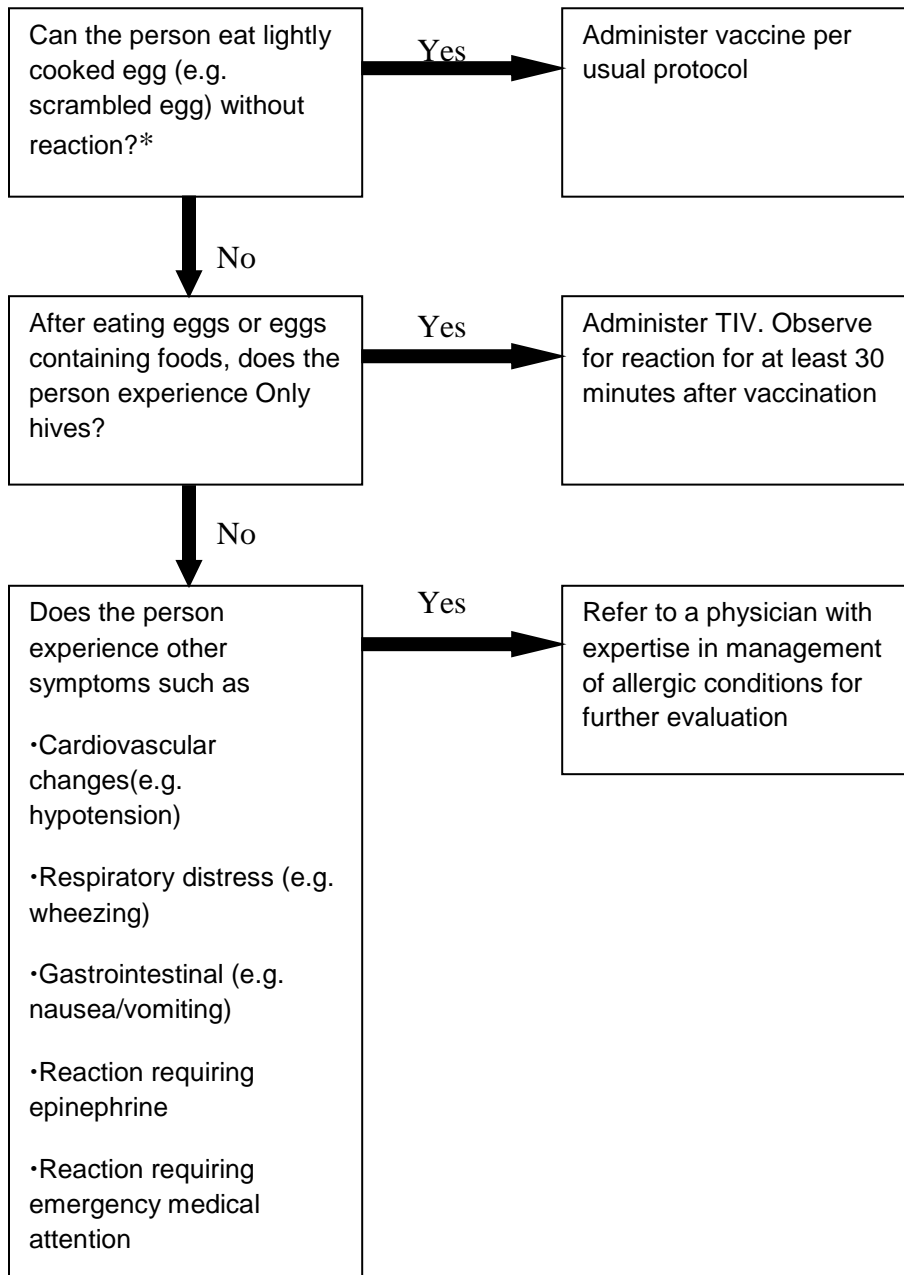
Kansas Healthcare Collaborative: Immunization of Hospital Healthcare Workers, Seasonal Influenza Toolkit, Updated 2011

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Figure 2. Recommendations regarding influenza vaccination for persons who report allergy to eggs- Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), 2011-2012 influenza season



\*Persons with egg allergy might tolerate egg in baked products (e.g., bread or cake). Tolerance to egg containing foods does not exclude the possibility of egg allergy.