

Health Security Committee/ Early Warning and Response System
Statement on
Influenza A(H1N1) Symptomatic Individuals Travelling
13.08.09

With the current pandemic situation and the large number of individuals travelling either for personal (i.e tourism) or professional reasons, an increasing number of individuals may develop symptoms just before planned travel or while travelling to a country different to their country of origin. In this context, travelling refers to crossing the border of an EU Member State by land, maritime or air modes of transport.

As a consequence, EU Member States may have to increasingly face the need to handle and manage cases among travellers who are outside their Member State of origin/residence on holidays or on business.

Under the Treaty establishing the European Community article 18.1 on Freedom of Movement applies. Countries should not implement measures and travel restrictions that lead to restriction of movement between EU Member States. However, in relation to A(H1N1) influenza, the overriding public health recommendation to symptomatic individuals remains to delay any travel and stay at home.

The following statement is a summary of the discussions for consideration by national contact points. It intends to provide a general guide to the Member States that would be reviewed according to the evolution of the situation.

1. People developing symptoms in their country of origin and before travelling to the country of destination would be recommended to postpone outbound departure according to the protocol of the country of origin, if any;
2. People developing symptoms in the country of destination, would be recommended
 - to postpone their return travel according to the protocol of the hosting country if any; and
 - to remain in the host country and remain in their hotel room (or other facility) and limit their contact with other people unless it is necessary to seek medical attention according to the protocol of the hosting country
3. People having developed symptoms in the country of destination and wishing to return to their country of origin despite the recommendations would not be prevented from travelling back to their country of origin, except for clinical reasons. People having developed symptoms and wishing to travel would be recommended to wear protective masks during transport.

The Member States commit themselves to re-evaluate the situation on a regular basis and to review this statement accordingly.