



## SOUTHWEST PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT

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[www.southwestgeorgiapublichealth.org](http://www.southwestgeorgiapublichealth.org)

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**For Immediate Release**

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### Southwest Health District confirms first fatality related to Pandemic H1N1

An Albany area man in his 60s is the first patient in the Southwest Health District's 14 counties and the third resident of Georgia who has died from Pandemic H1N1, says Southwest Health District Health Director Dr. Jacqueline Grant.

"With great sorrow, we acknowledge complications from the novel influenza virus H1N1 have claimed the life of a member of our community," Grant said. "We offer our sympathy to the individual's loved ones."

The older adult had underlying health conditions and had been hospitalized prior to his death on Friday, she said.

No other patients in the District are currently hospitalized with confirmed cases of H1N1, noted Grant, although nine hospitalizations (including the deceased patient), have occurred since the infection began spreading through Georgia earlier this year. A Cobb County woman who died in July was the state's first fatality linked to H1N1. Late last week, another Cobb County resident became the state's second confirmed H1N1 fatality.

"We have been concerned that this infection could result in severe illness, particularly in high-risk groups, which include children, pregnant women and people with compromised immune systems or chronic diseases," Grant said. "We cannot emphasize enough how important it is for everyone to practice cough and sneezing etiquette, to wash your hands thoroughly and to stay home if you are sick. Taking these three actions are our best protection to keep H1N1 from spreading."

Once seasonal flu vaccine becomes available, it will also play a key role in combating the pandemic's spread, she added.

Baker	Calhoun	Colquitt	Decatur	Dougherty	Early	Grady
Lee	Miller	Mitchell	Seminole	Terrell	Thomas	Worth

“We are expecting the seasonal flu vaccine to be out earlier than usual this year, maybe as early as late this month or early September,” Grant said. “As soon as it is available, we recommend people begin getting vaccinated.”

A vaccine for H1N1 is unlikely to be ready until mid-October at the earliest, she said.

Current information is available from your health department and online at [www.southwestgeorgiapublichealth.org](http://www.southwestgeorgiapublichealth.org) and [www.cdc.gov/swineflu/](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/).

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