



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**DATE: January 24, 2018**

### **Flu season is here!**

Flu season is here. Crow Wing County Community Services reports that cases of influenza are on the rise. “We have watched the illness reports in the southern states and hearing of great impact on schools and business. It’s now on the rise here in Minnesota following a similar pattern to what we saw last year with more cases expected in the coming weeks” said Michelle Moritz, Public Health Supervisor. Schools have been reporting influenza – like illness (ILI) as well as confirmed cases in long-term care facilities, and people presenting to clinics with influenza – like illness.

Did you get your shot? It is not too late if you haven’t. Influenza (Flu) season is generally December through February but can run as late as May. Most insurances will cover the vaccine without any out of pocket expense. Vaccinations are available at local medical clinics and pharmacies in Crow Wing County.

Influenza is a respiratory disease caused by a virus that attacks the nose, throat, and lungs. It is not the same as the “stomach flu.” Flu symptoms include fever, dry cough, sore throat, headache, extreme tiredness, and body aches. The flu can also be more dangerous for infants or toddlers, the elderly, or those with lung issues. These symptoms usually begin suddenly with the person being contagious and able to infect others.

Stop the spread:

While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them. Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or other necessities. Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever reducing medicine. During this time, get rest and drink lots of fluids to stay hydrated.

Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it. Wash your hands often and disinfect surfaces that may be contaminated with germs like the flu.

Go to the doctor or the emergency room if you are having difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen, sudden dizziness or confusion or flu-like symptoms that improve, but return with worse fever and cough.



Community Services expends more than \$163 million dollars annually, of which 4.66%, \$7.6 million is funded by the county levy. In 2015, total program costs were \$163,133,479 with Medical Assistance programs being the highest spending area at \$110 million, or 67.5% of the total program costs. Social Service programs represent the second largest portion of the total at \$41.4 million, or 25.4%. Cash assistance programs were 6.3% of the total at \$10.2 million. While this is a large portion of the county budget we have seen a significant decrease. For example, from 2009 to our proposed 2017 budget, we have reduced tax levy dollars by \$1,209,306, a decrease of 14.3%.

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