

Child Care Alert.....

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) discourage child care centers from requiring a doctor's note for children or staff to validate their illness or to return to the early childhood setting.

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services child care licensing rules do not require a note from a doctor for children to return after having an illness, except in the case of a few specific infectious diseases specified on the ODH Communicable Disease chart.

ODJFS recently sent out a message on its RSS feed reminding programs that notes are not required. Even though child care providers may be striving to protect children by requesting a formal authorization to return to care, this is creating a significant burden on clinics and emergency rooms during a time when they are already overwhelmed. This results in longer waits for ill individuals and could be particularly detrimental for those with the highest risk of experiencing complications from H1N1 Pandemic flu, such as young children.

ODH asks that programs consider revising their policy if they currently require notes for readmission. Early childhood professionals can protect themselves and the children for whom they care by conducting daily health checks and observing children throughout the day, isolating and discharging ill children and staff, covering coughs and sneezes, washing hands frequently and getting vaccinated when vaccines are available.

Additional guidance is available at <http://www.flu.gov> (see "school planning" tab).