Manitoba
Health, Seniors and Active Living

# *Patient Safety Learning Advisory*

## *Streptococcal A Sepsis Resulting in Death*

**Summary:**

A patient presented to the Emergency Department (ED), was diagnosed with Influenza and admitted for observation. The following day, the patient's blood work indicated a Streptococcal A infection.

The patient was transferred by ambulance to a tertiary care centre. The patient passed away 48 hours after their initial presentation to the ED.

The clinical presentation and vital signs including an elevated pulse and respiratory rate indicated the need for further investigation.

Earlier recognition of clinical deterioration and appropriate treatment may have changed the outcome in this case.

**Keywords:** sepsis, influenza, streptococcal A infection, National Early Warning Score, NEWS

This review is based on a single event.

**Findings of the Review:**

On presentation, the patients' vital signs were not within normal range. Investigation did not include a swab for strep or bloodwork. A chest x-ray was ordered due to poor inspiration and complaints of sternal pain.

The physician was aware that the family had all been sick with influenza symptoms in the week prior. This knowledge may have biased the assessment.

The patient's vital signs remained abnormal. Further clinical deterioration occurred overnight.

Provincially, a National Early Warning System is in development to assist in the recognition of a deteriorating patient and sepsis management. Early detection, timeliness and competency of clinical response are a triad of determinants of clinical outcome in people with acute illness.

It is believed that had this patient's vital signs been recorded on the National Early Warning Score record, the severity of the illness would have been identified sooner, resulting in a different course of treatment.

**System Learning:**

Form a multi-disciplinary working group to implement the provincial framework for National Early Warning Score (NEWS) to standardize the early recognition of a deteriorating client.

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