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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DENGUE FEVER IN PALM BEACH COUNTY PROMPTS ADVISORY

Palm Beach County, FL— A mosquito borne disease advisory was issued today by the Palm Beach County Health Department following confirmation of a locally acquired case of Dengue Fever.

“We have been closely monitoring the county for the possibility of Dengue being reintroduced in our area since we have seen it in counties north and south of us,” said Health Director Alina Alonso, MD. “With today’s confirmation I am issuing a Mosquito Borne Illness Advisory.”

In 2009 locally acquired cases of Dengue were diagnosed in Key West and since then, others have been found in South Florida. This is the first locally acquired case in Palm Beach County although eight others have been reported this year and acquired out of the country.

Classic dengue fever is characterized by acute onset of high fever, 3-14 days after the bite of an infected mosquito. Patients develop high fevers, severe headache, muscle and bone aches, rash, severe pain behind the eyes and mild bleeding from the nose or gums. Acute symptoms, when present, usually last about 1 week, but weakness, malaise, and anorexia may persist for several weeks. Treatment emphasizes relief of symptoms, avoiding aspirin and other non steroidal anti-inflammatory medications and drinking plenty of fluids. Severe manifestations (e.g., dengue hemorrhagic fever and dengue shock syndrome) are rare but may be fatal.

Dengue is carried by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito which is commonly known as the household mosquito but unlike others it is a day biter. The advisory encourages all to **drain** any standing water from around the home or business as these mosquitoes can leave their eggs in the smallest water reservoirs. All are also advised to **cover** their windows with screens in good condition, use air conditioning when possible and cover themselves with light weight long sleeve clothing and pants. Insect repellants containing DEET or picaridin are also effective in preventing the mosquito from biting.

Mosquito control has been notified and is stepping up its spraying efforts to reduce the *Aedes* mosquito population.

Persons experiencing symptoms should see their medical provider or if severe visit the nearest hospital or clinic.

Further information can be obtained by visiting the Department of Health Website at www.doh.state.fl.us, or the Palm Beach County Health Department site at www.pbchd.com.

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