

# Anderson Hospital experiences full influx of flu patients

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MARYVILLE - Anderson Hospital is experiencing the same as other area hospital with a full influx of flu patients.

This year's severe strain of the influenza virus is shaping up to create one of the worst flu seasons in recent history. To put this season's flu epidemic into perspective locally, Anderson Hospital compared flu stats from the months of December in 2016 and 2017.

In 2016, there were 49 positive flu swabs out of 351 collected at Anderson Hospital. In 2017, there were 1179 positive flu swabs out of 4848 collected.

“That’s a 96 percent increase in the number of positive flu swabs and a 93 percent increase in the number collected,” said Doris Driscoll, RN, Infection Control Nurse at Anderson. “The other part of this story, besides the sheer numbers, is the acuity of the patients is much higher this season.”

Because of the widespread flu and other illnesses, Anderson Hospital after the first week of the year was experiencing limited bed capacity to accommodate patients. The Emergency Department is also experiencing large surges of patients.

“While near peak census, available beds continue to fluctuate as patients are discharged and admitted,” said Lisa Klaustermeier, Chief Nursing Officer. “We’ve taken proactive steps to manage this influx of patients by thinking outside the box.” One of those measures instituted includes instituting a Manpower Pool.

“We are requiring that all management staff report any available staff members that can be utilized in another department,” said Robin Steinmann, Administrative Director of Human Resources. “Our employees, both clinical and nonclinical, may be asked to assist in patient care areas and/or other departments.”