A Department of Ventura County Health Care Agency

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Public Health Investigating Cases of Cardiomyopathy in Ventura County

[Ventura County, Calif.] -- Ventura County Public Health (VCPH) has been investigating 12 patients with cardiomyopathy. Cardiomyopathy is a condition where the heart begins to work with decreased efficiency, and is marked by fatigue and shortness of breath. The patients who have recently been diagnosed with cardiomyopathy in the county range in age from 19 to 78 years of age. Two people have died – one in March, and another in mid-December. Public Health included the death that occurred in mid-December on review of that patient's medical records earlier this week.

Lab tests so far have not identified a cause of the cardiomyopathy. Public Health is working closely with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to identify the cause of this disease. There is absolutely no evidence linking this outbreak to either H1N1 or the Zika virus.

"We believe that whatever is causing this illness is not highly contagious because none of the contacts of any of these patients have developed serious illness," said Dr. Levin. The Health Department is following all contacts of these cases and there has not been any hospital employee that cared for one of these patients, nor family member nor friend who has developed a serious illness.

If a member of the public experiences fatigue and shortness of breath, they are encouraged to see their primary care physician for evaluation.

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