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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**H7N2 AVIAN INFLUENZA IDENTIFIED IN WESTCHESTER RESIDENT
No Public Health Impact**

The Centers for Disease Control on Friday confirmed type H7N2 Avian Influenza in a Westchester County resident who was sick in November 2003 but has since recovered. H7N2 is less severe than the strain of Avian Flu that sickened people in Asia earlier this year.

“At this time, it is not known where or how this individual may have been exposed to H7N2 or to what extent any underlying medical condition contributed to his illness, though we are conducting an on-going investigation,” stated Dr. Joshua Lipsman, Commissioner of Health for Westchester County. “None of the patient’s immediate family members are known to have contracted the infection. At present, there is no evidence of person-to-person transmission or risk of infection to the general public. The Centers for Disease Control, the New York State Department of Health and Westchester County Health officials are cooperating in the investigation,” he said.

Influenza viruses that infect birds are called “avian flu viruses.” These viruses are genetically distinguishable from influenza viruses that normally infect people. Birds that are infected with avian influenza viruses release virus in saliva, nasal secretions and feces. Disease spreads to other birds when susceptible birds have contact with contaminated excretions.

H7N2 Avian Influenza has been observed on numerous occasions in poultry in the United States, but is rarely associated with human illness. Only one other human case is known to have occurred in this country, in a Virginia poultry worker in 2002. It is unusual for a human to contract H7N2, but there is no indication of any

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increased risk to members of the general public. It is believed that most cases of avian influenza infection in humans result from contact with infected poultry or contaminated surfaces. Symptoms experienced by persons with H7N2 influenza have included conjunctivitis (eye infections) and influenza-like illness with cough, fever and muscle aches.

For more information about H7N2 Avian Influenza, call the Westchester County Department of Health at (914) 813-5000 or visit www.westchestergov.com/health.

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