

2 more kids sickened with adenovirus that has killed 10 children at New Jersey facility

November 13 2018, by Scott Fallon, The Record (Hackensack, N.j.)

Two more children at a Wanaque medical facility were diagnosed over the weekend with adenovirus, which has killed 10 medically fragile children at the facility since the outbreak began in late September, health officials reported.

The two children bring the total number of pediatric cases at the Wanaque Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation to 33.

That news is especially concerning to a mother of an 18-year-old who is recovering from the virus at a nearby hospital and is scheduled to return to the center this week. She is afraid her daughter will get sick again.

"I don't want her to go back, but it's the only facility that's available," the mother said Monday morning.

The mother, who lives in New York City and spoke on the condition of anonymity to protect her family's privacy, has been at her daughter's bedside at St. Joseph's University Medical Center in Paterson for a week.

"If I could take her back home with me, I would," she said. "She's medically stable. She got through this. But now she has to go back."

The Health Department won't divulge how many sickened children are still at the Wanaque Center and how many have been taken to hospitals. But the two new cases confirm that the virus is still spreading among

residents of the facility's ventilator unit.

Born with cerebral palsy, the 18-year-old has been a resident of Wanaque for six years following an episode of cardiac arrest that put her into a vegetative state.

The mother visited her daughter on Nov. 5 and became concerned that there were yellowish secretions coming out of her daughter's mouth. She called the next day and was told the secretions were still present, and that her daughter had developed a temperature that reached 99.6 degrees.

Fearing that her daughter could have contracted [adenovirus](#), the mother pressed staff members to take her daughter to a hospital.

They finally did at 1 a.m. Monday, Nov. 5. The level of oxygen in the 18-year-old's bloodstream plummeted and she was given 80 percent pure oxygen in the emergency room to help restore those levels, the mother said.

Her daughter was diagnosed later that day with adenovirus. She developed pneumonia as a secondary infection. Her blood pressure and blood sugar spiked through the week, her mother said.

The daughter had stabilized by Friday afternoon. By Monday morning, doctors had told the mother that her daughter had improved so much that she could be discharged back to Wanaque by Tuesday.

Dr. Shereef Elnahal, the state health commissioner, has been reluctant to move recovering residents to other facilities fearing they could possibly spread the virus to another facility. Complicating things further: there are only four pediatric nursing homes in New Jersey. Wanaque and another facility in Voorhees have adenovirus outbreaks, and the other two are at capacity with significant waiting lists.

An outbreak is considered over when two consecutive two-week incubation periods have passed. If no new cases are identified, the outbreak will be deemed over in the second full week of December.

Meanwhile, [health officials](#) reported that another child was sickened with a milder form of adenovirus at a long-term care facility in Vorhees. That brings the total number of cases to eight at that facility. No one has died there.

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