

Biden on swine flu: Mitigation works best

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- President Barack Obama is not closing the U.S.-Mexican border to contain swine flu based on experts' recommendations, Vice President Joe Biden said Thursday.

"(We) have contacted and been in constant contact with the leading health experts, both in the world as well as here in the United States, and they have suggested that that is not the way we should move," Biden said on NBC's "Today Show."

Instead, experts recommended the country "deal with mitigation, and that is the circumstances where large crowds of people, whether they're in school rooms or in soccer stadiums or in malls, or whatever, where the flu is transmitted," Biden said. "Closing a classroom and closing the border are two fundamentally different things."

Plus, he asked, "Which borders do we close? Do we close the Canadian border ...? Do we close flights coming out of countries in Europe where it has been identified now? We're told that is not an efficacious use of our effort; that we should be focusing on mitigation."

If members of his family were considering travel to Mexico, Biden said he would give them the same advice the administration has been giving all Americans since the outbreak began: Avoid unnecessary travel Mexico, the epicenter for the outbreak, and avoid travel in confined quarters.

"I would tell members of my family -- and I have -- I wouldn't go anywhere in confined places now," Biden said. "It's not (just) going to Mexico, it's you're in a confined aircraft when one person sneezes it goes all the way through the aircraft."

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