

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Executives
AHCA/NCAL Leadership and Members

FROM: Janice Zalen, Sr. Director of Special Programs

SUBJECT: **H1N1 and Seasonal Influenza Update No. 26**

DATE: November 19, 2009

Almost all of the flu viruses identified this season so far are 2009 H1N1. From April 2009 through October 17, 2009, the CDC estimates that 20 million people became ill with H1N1 influenza, 98,000 were hospitalized, and 3,900 died. For those over 65 years of age, 2 million became ill, 9,000 were hospitalized, and 440 died. To put this in perspective, for those under the age of 18 years, 8 million became ill, 36,000 were hospitalized, and 540 died. For the 19-64 year old population, 12 million people became ill, 53,000 were hospitalized, and 2,900 died.

According to an article in the *New England Journal of Medicine* titled "Older Age and a Reduced Likelihood of 2009 H1N1 Virus Infection," individuals born before 1957 may be at lower infection risk. The study may be accessed at <http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/361/20/2000>.

Seasonal Influenza: Fill out AHCA's Survey If You Need Vaccine

As of November 6, approximately 93.7 million doses of seasonal influenza vaccine have been distributed, which is about 82% of doses expected this season. Although there will not be enough seasonal influenza vaccine this year to meet all the needs of LTC, AHCA's efforts to steer the limited, remaining vaccine doses to LTC is seeing some success. Earlier this month, influenza vaccine manufacturer Novartis shipped 3,000 doses of Fluviron seasonal flu vaccine to long term care facilities via the distributor, FFF. With the help of the CDC and National Influenza Vaccination Summit, as vaccine becomes available from manufacturers, distribution will be directed, to the extent possible, to long term care facilities.

In addition, both Safeway and Walgreens corporate offices are working with AHCA to move some of their vaccine from their stores to long term care facilities.

If you need seasonal vaccine for your residents and/or employees, please fill out the brief survey monkey at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=nbokeC3qCJQNUdMJxveD2A_3d_3d. AHCA will forward the information to Walgreens and/or Safeway. Walgreens and Safeway – and potentially other outlets that have vaccine – will try to match up facilities in need with stores that have available vaccine. If vaccine is available in your locality, you will hear directly from either Walgreens or Safeway, or other partners with vaccine.

H1N1 Vaccine

According to CDC, the H1N1 vaccine is taking longer to produce than manufacturers initially expected, and there is variability in supply and demand of H1N1 vaccine at the state and local levels. As the H1N1 vaccine supply situation improves, more people in priority groups will be able to get vaccinated. Clinical trials conducted by the National Institutes of Health and the vaccine manufacturers have shown that the new H1N1 vaccine is both safe and effective.

Since past flu pandemics were characterized by multiple waves, H1N1 vaccination is recommended even if flu activity slows, as it could resume later in the season.

Respirators

As we have previously reported, CDC interim guidance for H1N1 Infection Control recommends the use of respiratory protection that is at least as protective as a fit-tested disposable N95 respirator for healthcare personnel who are in close contact with patients with suspected or confirmed 2009 H1N1 influenza. (See H1N1 Update No. 25 at http://www.ahcancal.org/facility_operations/clinical_practice/Pages/H1N1SwineFluUpdate25.aspx for more information.)

CDC recently updated its brochure, *Disposable Respirators: General Donning Instructions*. This brochure provides simple pictures and clear instructions in both English and Spanish. To access the English version, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/eua/pdf/n95instructions.pdf>. The Spanish version is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/eua/pdf/respirator-spanish.pdf>

More H1N1 Resources

CDC's H1N1 Flu web section contains hundreds of documents for healthcare professionals and the public. To access the web section's home page, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu>. The federal government maintains a web site, www.flu.gov, which contains lots of information including a flu shot locator.