

Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH)
Division of Epidemiology and Immunization

**Seasonal Influenza Vaccine Supply May Be Delayed for 2009-2010
--Need to Plan for Concurrent Seasonal and H1N1 Vaccine Efforts--**

September 16, 2009

Based on national guidance from the Center's for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and in preparation for H1N1 flu vaccine arriving in October, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) Immunization Program asked health care providers to begin vaccinating with seasonal influenza vaccine as soon as it became available in August. We asked local health departments that rely on state-supplied vaccine to schedule the majority of their seasonal flu clinics in early October.

Unfortunately, we have recently learned from both the CDC and the vaccine manufacturers that the scheduled delivery for the remaining doses of seasonal flu vaccine will *not* be as accelerated as originally anticipated, due to prioritization of H1N1 vaccine and other challenges.

We have received over 40% of our seasonal flu vaccine supply to date. Remaining doses are expected to become available over the next 4-6 weeks with the majority of doses still expected by the end of October and all doses delivered by early November.

Additionally, doses of both state-supplied and privately purchased pediatric formulation vaccines (0.25ml pre-filled syringes for ≤ 4 years of age) have also been *delayed*. Currently, less than 30% of our total supply is available and the majority of doses are expected to be delivered by the end of October.

However, the timing of vaccine availability for the different types (seasonal vs. H1N1) may closely match virus circulation. Almost all of the influenza viruses currently circulating are H1N1. Seasonal influenza virus strains may not appear until later in the season.

Recommendations

MDPH recommends that all health care providers continue to vaccinate patients with seasonal influenza vaccine during routine visits and in scheduled clinics as supply allows.

Local Health Departments and Schools

- Large public clinics and school based flu clinics should be delayed until mid October (and possibly into early November) unless there is sufficient vaccine on hand to meet the expected demand. By mid-October, we anticipate vaccine supplies will be sufficient to mount large clinics efforts.
- Anticipate holding clinics for H1N1 flu vaccine starting in early November as well. Consider offering both seasonal and H1N1 flu vaccine at these clinics.

(over)

Pediatric Providers

- Continue to vaccinate your patients based on your available vaccine supply and formulation types.
- Schedule vaccination appointments in late October for any infants who cannot now be vaccinated due to lack of current supplies. By late October there should be sufficient supplies of both state-supplied and privately-purchased pediatric formulation seasonal flu vaccine.
- Plan for *simultaneous* administration of both seasonal and H1N1 flu vaccine starting in mid-late October. H1N1 flu vaccine will become available starting in early October. Young children are one of the highest risk groups for H1N1 influenza. Pediatric providers will be allocated some of the initial doses of H1N1 vaccine that become available in Massachusetts.

We want to thank you for your efforts at this most difficult and challenging of times. MDPH will notify you if there are any changes in influenza vaccine supply.

Please remember to register with the MDPH H1N1 Vaccine Registration System at <http://www.mass.gov/dph/h1n1registration>, even if you are already enrolled with the MDPH Immunization Program and receive other vaccines from the Department.

Any questions related to accessing the *H1N1 flu vaccine* website, the enrollment process, or general questions about the H1N1 vaccine allocation and distribution process can be directed to the MDPH H1N1 Registration Help Desk at (888) 578-5585, (617)-983-6898 or email (MDPHH1N1Registration@state.ma.us).

If you have questions regarding *seasonal* flu vaccine availability, please contact the Vaccine Management Unit at 617-983-6828.