

MaineHealth

Weekly H1N1 Update Newsletter
December 18, 2009

*Welcome to the MaineHealth H1N1 Weekly Update Newsletter
A Publication of the MaineHealth H1N1 Workgroup*

About this Newsletter:

This publication will be released each Friday throughout the fall and early winter to assist healthcare providers and infection prevention specialists in dealing with the effects of the H1N1 flu virus on the Maine population.

In This Issue:

- Maine CDC Update – Pages 1 - 3
- Health Care Providers Update – Page 4
- Supplies – Page 5
- Publisher's Contact Information – Page 5

Quick Hits:

- **H1N1 Continues to Decline in Maine, but Surges Anticipated:** There continues to be a decrease in flu activity, however the Maine CDC expects the H1N1 flu virus to continue to circulate and surges to occur. A seasonal flu surge is expected as well.
- **Vaccine Supply:** Maine has received more than 500,000 doses of H1N1 vaccine. **Based on recent demand, the Maine CDC is now recommending that H1N1 vaccine be offered to anyone who wishes to receive it when local supplies allow.**
- **Nasal Vaccine vs. Injectable Vaccine:** The nasal spray vaccine is a safe and effective vaccine option for healthy people ages 2 through 49 who are not pregnant. The Maine CDC requests that the nasal spray form of H1N1 vaccine be used for all healthy, non-pregnant health care workers younger than 50, unless they are caring for patients undergoing bone marrow or stem cell transplants.

Maine CDC Update:

The most recent CDC data indicates that H1N1 flu has been relatively mild in Maine over the past week compared with other states, and continues to decline. Nationally, data indicate that H1N1 is striking young people the hardest.

This week's statistics:

- Hospitals: There were 11 new hospitalizations due to H1N1 in the last week, down from 31 the week before. Of those hospitalized, all were age 25 and older. One individual older than 64 required intensive care.
- Other Facilities: Outbreaks were reported in one long term care facility, one acute care facility, one K-12 school, and two other institutions. The outbreaks occurred in Androscoggin, Cumberland, Oxford, and Penobscot counties.
- Deaths: Four deaths were reported over the past week, all in adults older than 64. All 17 deaths since August have occurred in people with underlying health conditions. The CDC recommends that **people with an underlying health condition seek vaccine at their specialty providers, primary care providers, or at public clinics listed at: www.maine.gov. Additionally, anyone with underlying health conditions who experiences flu-like symptoms should contact his or her health care providers immediately** to receive a prescription for antiviral medications (such as Tamiflu®).

H1N1 Vaccine Supply: Since October, Maine has received more than 500,000 doses of H1N1 vaccine. **Based on recent demand, the Maine CDC is now recommending that H1N1 vaccine be offered to anyone who wishes to receive it when local supplies allow.** The CDC is still recommending that the focus for vaccine still be the five high priority groups as defined by US CDC, but public clinics will not need to turn others away. The CDC is encouraging health care providers with sufficient supplies to provide vaccine to all who want it, and those without sufficient vaccine to focus their vaccine supply to those in the high priority groups: pregnant and recently pregnant women; household members and caregivers of infants younger than six months old; all people ages 6 months through 24 years; people ages 25 through 64 with underlying health conditions; and health care and EMS workers.

Distribution of Nasal vs. Injectable Vaccine: The nasal spray vaccine is available in slightly greater quantities than injectable vaccine. If healthy people who qualify for the nasal spray are given injectable vaccine, this can easily deplete the injectable vaccine supply for those who are most vulnerable to being hospitalized or dying from H1N1. Therefore, **the Maine CDC requests that nasal spray vaccine be given to anyone who is eligible to receive it. The nasal spray vaccine is a safe and effective vaccine option for healthy people ages 2 through 49 who are not pregnant.**

Nasal spray flu vaccine is not new. It has been used successfully in many settings for seasonal flu vaccination since 2003. Even if someone comes into regular contact with others who cannot receive the nasal spray vaccine they **may still be able to receive the nasal spray vaccine as long as they are healthy, not pregnant, and age 2 through 49.** The nasal spray vaccine is **safe** for breastfeeding mothers. **Health care workers who cannot receive the vaccine themselves (due to pregnancy, health condition, or age) may still administer the vaccine.**

For more information on nasal spray vaccine, please see the Fact Sheet at:
http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/maineflu/LAIV_factsheet.pdf.

Distribution Sites: Over the coming days and weeks, vaccine will become more available in a variety of settings, including health care provider offices, public clinics, retail locations, large employer settings, nursing homes, etc. People have three easy options in seeking vaccine: check the clinic locator at www.maine flu.gov, call 211, or call their health care providers.

Vaccine Recall: Approximately 800,000 doses of H1N1 vaccine in the .25 mL pre-filled syringe presentation manufactured by Sanofi Pasteur and approved for children ages 6-35 months have been recalled due to questions of **potency. This is not a safety recall.**

The Maine CDC notified 25 practices on Wednesday that they had received some of the recalled lots of H1N1 vaccine. The remaining vaccine from these lots was pulled from their shelves. About 4,500 doses of the recalled lots had been recently shipped to Maine, and reportedly many of those had **not** yet been administered. Because there were no safety concerns and the vaccine was slightly weaker than the license standards called for, there are no recommendations for the children who received the vaccine except to proceed with their second dose as would normally occur.

All children younger than 10 years old should get the recommended two doses of H1N1 vaccine approximately a month apart for the optimal immune response. Therefore, children younger than 10 years old who have only received one dose of vaccine thus far should still receive a second dose of 2009 H1N1 vaccine. **Parents of children who received vaccine from the recalled lots do not need to take any action other than to complete the two-dose immunization series if not already completed.**

For more information:

<http://www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/index.php?topic=Portal+News&id=86326&v=article-2008>.

Reporting Vaccine Administration: The Maine CDC requires all H1N1 vaccine providers and/or administrators to submit the vaccine administration data into Maine CDC's weekly vaccine reporting system. The weekly vaccine reporting form can be found at: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/maineflu/h1n1/health-care-providers.shtml>. Detailed instructions are also available at: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/maineflu/h1n1/H1N1-Weekly-Reporting-Form-instructions.pdf>.

Important Information for Vaccine Administrators: There have been national delays in the .25 mL pre-filled syringe presentation of H1N1 vaccine for children ages 6-35 months. The **Maine CDC encourages vaccine administrators to utilize nasal spray vaccine for healthy children ages two and older when available. Also, remember that Sanofi and CSL manufacture multidose vial presentations that are licensed for anyone 6 months and older.**

Health Care Providers:

H1N1 Vaccine Safety: The benefits of getting the H1N1 vaccine far outweigh the very small risk of serious complications from vaccination.

- The US CDC and the FDA are carefully monitoring the H1N1 vaccine reports, and after millions of doses of vaccine being administered in the U.S., the number, pattern and types of adverse event reports are similar to what is seen for seasonal influenza vaccine.
- More than 90% of adverse event reports nationwide have been classified as "not serious" and are symptoms frequently seen after vaccinations, such as soreness at the vaccination site. For more information please refer to this MMWR report on H1N1 vaccine safety at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm58e1204a1.htm>.

Healthcare Provider Education and Questions:

Vaccine Dose Spacing and Administration: Do you have questions about H1N1 vaccine dose spacing and administration with seasonal flu or other vaccines? To get the information you need please consult the following table from US CDC:

http://www.cdc.gov/H1N1flu/vaccination/dosespacing_admin.html.

Additional vaccine-related information for health care providers can be found on the Maine CDC web site at: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/maineflu/h1n1/hc-providers/vaccine-info-hcp.shtml>.

Antiviral Treatment: The Maine CDC continues to encourage physicians to prescribe antivirals as appropriate. Recent data demonstrates that antiviral use has increased in Maine. For more information about antivirals, visit the Maine CDC web site at:

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/maineflu/h1n1/anti-viral.shtml>.

The US CDC has made the following updates to its interim recommendations on the use of antivirals:

- Information regarding use of intravenous peramivir under an emergency use authorization;
- Information on availability of renal dosing for peramivir;
- Updated oseltamivir dosing instructions for children younger than 1 year of age based on weight;

The updated recommendations can be viewed at the US CDC website at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/recommendations.htm>.

Immunization Requirements for Health Care Workers: Effective December 8, these rules (<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/10/144/144c264.doc>) finalize through regular rulemaking the updated immunization requirements for health care workers. The rules were originally adopted on an emergency basis. The Health Care Worker H1N1 Immunization Reporting form is available at: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/maineflu/h1n1/health-care-providers.shtml#highlights>.

Supplies:

Many health care organizations continue to face severe supply chain shortages, especially with regard to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). To help address this issue, the Southern Maine Regional Resource Center has identified access to four additional brands of NIOSH-approved N95 Particulate Respirators for purchase:

- Gerson N95 NIOSH Approved cup-style Particulate Respirator 1730
- Radnor® N95 NIOSH Approved Particulate Respirator With Adjustable Nose Clip
- Liberty 1895N: N95 NIOSH Approved
- Moldex 2200N95 NIOSH Approved Particulate Respirators

All of the respirators listed above are available immediately through Gloves, Etc., Inc., 1 Diamond Street, Biddeford, ME 04005 Tel: (800) 987-2999 * Fax: (207) 286-3267.

Full details, including prices, are in the attached document.

Please contact Gloves, Etc. directly to inquire further and to place orders. Let them know that Southern Maine Regional Resource Center referred you!

Publisher:

If you have additional questions or suggestions for this newsletter, please feel free to contact the publisher.

Jackie Cawley, DO

Senior Medical Director for Clinical Integration

MaineHealth

541-7521

cawlej@mainehealth.org