



H1N1 Partner and School Briefing

Date: December 2, 2009
To: All Rhode Islanders
From: Director of Health, David R. Gifford, MD, MPH
Re: Information on H1N1 and school-based vaccination clinics in Rhode Island

Local Influenza Activity Level: Widespread¹, H1N1 predominant circulating strain
Rhode Island²: 343 hospitalized cases, 9 deaths
Sentinel Surveillance (% of visits due to influenza-like illness)³: Rhode Island: 5.41%, New England Region: 6.0%, Nation: 3.91%

While flu activity in Rhode Island continues to decrease, levels of influenza-like illness remain high compared to those of previous years. H1N1 vaccination remains important to protect individuals against the resurgence of the virus that experts expect to see in the coming months.

CDC H1N1 e-mail scam alert

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s Cyber Security Incident Response Team (CSIRT) has received reports of fraudulent emails referencing a CDC-sponsored State Vaccination Program for H1N1 flu. Users that click on the embedded link in the email asking them to create a personal profile are at risk of having malicious code installed on their systems. To reduce the risk of being a victim of this cyber attack, do not follow unsolicited links or open or respond to unsolicited email messages and use caution when entering personal information online.

College and university-based H1N1 vaccination clinics

Nine residential colleges and universities in Rhode Island began vaccinating students against H1N1 flu this week. Over a three-week period, all colleges, universities, and technical schools in the state will host clinics for students through age 24 who are enrolled at those institutions. On December 14, H1N1 vaccination clinics are tentatively scheduled to begin (pending vaccine availability) on the campuses of colleges and universities with non-residential student populations. For information about clinics at an individual school, contact that school's health services office. For general information about college and university-based clinics, see www.health.ri.gov.

Healthy college students are receiving vaccine intranasally, unlike children in kindergarten through grade 12 who are receiving injectable vaccine in schools. College students who are unable to receive the vaccine intranasally will receive injectable vaccine approved only for individuals over the age of 18. The Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH)'s school-based vaccination program for children in kindergarten through grade 12 is not affected by the vaccination of college and university students.

H1N1 vaccination clinics for pregnant and post-partum women

An H1N1 vaccination clinic for pregnant and post-partum women is scheduled for Wednesday, December 9 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the VNA of Care New England's office at 51 Health Lane in Warwick. This office is on

¹ Rhode Island reported Widespread activity for the week of November 22 to November 28, 2009. Percentages of influenza-like illness remain above baseline in all five regions of the state. For details see <http://www.health.ri.gov/flu/about/surveillance/>.

² Confirmed and probable hospitalizations and deaths since September 1, 2009

³ Influenza-like illness activity from November 15 to November 21, 2009

the Kent Hospital campus. This clinic will be open to pregnant women and to post-partum women up to six months post-partum. Westerly Hospital is planning additional clinics for pregnant and post-partum women the week of December 7. The dates and times of these clinics will be communicated as they become available.

South County Hospital is holding an H1N1 vaccination clinic for pregnant and post-partum women up to six months post-partum on Wednesday, December 2 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at its Potter Conference Center at 100 Kenyon Avenue. For more information about this clinic, see <http://www.schospital.com/news.cfm?id=459>.

H1N1 school-based clinic vaccine uptake

In the first 18 days of HEALTH's 28-school-day H1N1 school-based vaccination program, 77,774 school-aged children have received the H1N1 vaccine. Of the students enrolled in schools that hosted clinics during this time period, 76% received the vaccine.

Second H1N1 dose for children aged 9 years and younger

HEALTH still plans to begin offering second doses of H1N1 vaccine to elementary school students through 9 years of age in schools in January and February. Children six months through 5 years of age should receive second doses in physicians' offices as adequate vaccine becomes available. More information about school-based vaccination clinics for second doses will be made available on HEALTH's [website](#) and through the media in the coming weeks.

Location of H1N1 Vaccination Clinic For Rhode Islanders (K-12) in Out-of-State Schools

HEALTH will hold its H1N1 vaccination clinic for school-aged Rhode Islanders (K-12) who attend out-of-state schools at the Cannon Building, its headquarters, in Providence. The clinic will run from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. on December 12, 2009. Children who were not pre-registered for this clinic or who are not in kindergarten through grade 12 WILL NOT be vaccinated at this clinic. Clear signage in and around the Cannon Building will direct parents and guardians to the vaccine administration area. The Cannon Building is located at Three Capitol Hill, just north of the Rhode Island State House. For directions to the Cannon Building and more information about the December 12 clinic, see <http://www.ri.gov/press/view/10262>.

School-based H1N1 vaccination clinic best practices

Sound planning and good clinic management have helped all of HEALTH's daytime and evening school-based vaccination clinics run smoothly. Many clinic organizers have advised HEALTH of specific best practices that worked at their sites.

Daytime Clinics:

- Arrange for a substitute school nurse teacher to handle students' routine health issues.
- If additional H1N1 Vaccination Teams assist at your school, avoid overcrowding the observation area by pacing vaccine administration.
- Ensure that students leave observation areas promptly after their 15 minutes of observation pass and don't loiter.
- Provide an adequate number of chairs in the observation area.
- Have the day's list of absences at registration tables. This will ensure that only students who are officially present for the day will be vaccinated and will prevent clinic organizers from having to search for absent students who had returned consent forms in advance.
- Set aside one or more staff members without specific assignments. They can troubleshoot.
- Use stickers or stamps to identify students who are registered for their vaccinations.
- Keep school staffers who answer parents' phone calls updated about clinic plans and policies.
- Recruit as many parent volunteers as possible.
- Keep stretchers out of site.
- Be prepared with water for volunteers.

Evening Clinics:

- **Communicate to parents plans to stagger vaccinations (e.g. “Children with last names beginning with the letters A through G will be vaccinated between 4 and 5:30 p.m.”).**
- Arrange for adequate security in your clinic’s registration area, vaccine administration area and outside of your school. Security outside of your school will help address traffic-flow issues.
- Establish a separate area to vaccinate hysterical or disruptive children.
- Shield children who are awaiting vaccination from children who are receiving their shots.
- Provide an activity for children to keep them calm and occupied during their 15-minute observation periods.
- Arrange tables, chairs and wastebaskets in the vaccine administration area before Rhode Island Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) members arrive.
- Use stickers or stamps to identify students who are registered for their vaccinations to distinguish them from siblings or other children who do not attend your school.
- Have ample school staff to register students. This will ensure an orderly registration process. In addition, familiar faces are comforts to both parents and students.
- Provide clear signage outside and inside of your school that will direct parents to specific areas.
- Be prepared with enrollment rosters at your registration tables.

Resources

- HEALTH at <http://www.health.ri.gov>;
- Archived partner briefings and regular news updates: <http://www.health.ri.gov/news/flu/>
- H1N1 Information Line (M-F 8:30am- 4:30pm) 401-222-8022
- H1N1 email address h1n1@health.ri.gov
- <http://www.flu.gov>