



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE**
Thomas Farley, MD, MPH
Commissioner

Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc
Assistant Commissioner

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Bureau of Immunization
2 Lafayette Street, 19th Fl.
New York, NY 10007

Dear Colleague:

In response to the emergence of novel H1N1 (swine origin) influenza A virus earlier this year, the federal government initiated a vaccine development program. H1N1 vaccine is currently being manufactured and is expected to be available in late October. Initial plans are to distribute this vaccine through public health departments nationwide. The New York City (NYC) Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) is planning to distribute this vaccine to both public and private health facilities to ensure that New Yorkers have as many vaccination points as possible. NYC DOHMH will make H1N1 vaccine available, at no cost, to providers who plan to vaccinate their patients.

In order to be eligible to receive H1N1 vaccine, providers must register with the Citywide Immunization Registry (CIR), a centralized record keeping system that tracks the immunization status of individuals. Because NYC Health Code requires that all immunizations administered to children <19 years of age be reported to DOHMH, most practices that immunize children are already registered in the CIR and do not need to register. However, most health care practices that care for adult patients are not currently registered with the CIR and will need to register, sign a provider agreement and report H1N1 vaccine doses administered to patients to the CIR to receive H1N1 vaccine. Providers who treat only inpatients or whose clinic practice is solely hospital-based and operated will not need to register independently as both vaccine ordering and reporting will be conducted by the facility. A fact sheet describing the CIR is attached. DOHMH will provide technical assistance to providers interested in registering with CIR. To register your practice, or to get more information about the CIR, please visit <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cir/a03c.html> or call 212-676-2323. Once providers are registered, they will receive additional information on ordering H1N1 influenza vaccine.

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has released its recommendations for use of the H1N1 vaccine. The initial list of priority groups recommended to receive H1N1 vaccine include:

- Pregnant women
- Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months
- Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel
- All people from 6 months through 24 years
- Persons aged 25 through 64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza.

The full recommendations are available in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, August 28, 2009/58 at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5810a1.htm>. Regular updates on H1N1 are posted at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/cd/cd-h1n1flu.shtml>. If your practice sees any of these priority groups, the Health Department urges you to register in the CIR and offer H1N1 vaccine to your patients.

Sincerely,

Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc
Assistant Commissioner
Bureau of Immunization