



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH
LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

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DIRECTOR

Dear Health Care Provider:

Seasonal flu always has the potential to cause serious morbidity and mortality. In fact, each year an estimated 36,000 Americans die secondary to influenza and 200,000 are hospitalized. This year, with the addition of the 2009 Novel Influenza A H1N1 virus (also called swine flu in the media) circulating along with seasonal influenzas, we are preparing for a potentially challenging flu season.

Vaccination is the most effective method for preventing influenza and its complications. Seasonal flu vaccine will be available early this year, and the Michigan Department of Community Health recommends providers vaccinate patients as soon as they have the vaccine.

Seasonal flu vaccine will not likely protect against the Novel Influenza A H1N1 strain. An 2009 Influenza A H1N1 flu vaccine currently is in production and should be available for public distribution in early fall. Since the 2009 Influenza A H1N1 flu vaccine will be publicly purchased, providers who offer this vaccine must work in conjunction with their local health department. This new immunization may be a two-dose vaccine for some age groups. To assure accurate vaccine tracking, patient recall, and adverse event monitoring, **all providers are required to use the Michigan Care Improvement Registry (MCIR) to track and document administration and dispensing of 2009 Influenza A H1N1 flu vaccine and antiviral medications.**

MCIR was created in 1998 to collect reliable childhood immunization information in an easily accessible online format for authorized users and later expanded to include adults. Entering information of all administered vaccines into MCIR is good clinical practice. Doing so helps reduce vaccine-preventable diseases, diminish over-vaccination, and gives providers access to an up-to-date patient immunization history – and use of MCIR is free.

Patients soon will arrive at your office for both the seasonal and 2009 Influenza A H1N1 flu vaccine, so the time to prepare is now. Visit www.mcir.org and complete the MCIR Provider User/Usage Agreement form and become an active MCIR participant. All physician offices, including those currently enrolled in the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program and MCIR, will need to enroll in the 2009 Novel H1N1 flu vaccine program when this new enrollment form is made available. If you are already a MCIR provider, please contact your regional MCIR office for assistance.

Groups recommended to receive 2009 Novel H1N1 flu vaccine include:

- **Pregnant women** - due to higher risk of complications and potential protection to their infants who cannot be vaccinated;
- **Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than six months of age** - younger infants are at increased risk of influenza-related complications and cannot be vaccinated. Vaccination of those in close contact with infants less than six months of age may help protect infants by “cocooning” them from exposure to the virus;
- **Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel** - infections among healthcare workers may be a potential source of infection for vulnerable patients;
- **All individuals six months through 24 years of age;** and
- **Individuals 25 years of age through 64 years of age who have health conditions associated with a higher risk of medical complications resulting from influenza.**

Information about seasonal and 2009 Novel H1N1 flu, including vaccination and antiviral treatment recommendations, can be found at www.michigan.gov/flu and www.cdc.gov/flu. These sites will be updated as the CDC issues more guidance. If you have any questions, please contact the MDCH Immunization Division at (517) 335-8159.

Sincerely,

Gregory S. Holzman, MD, MPH
Chief Medical Executive