



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
LANSING

October 2019

Dear Michigan Hospital CEO:

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and the Michigan Health & Hospital Association (MHA) strongly encourage hospitals to ensure their healthcare personnel (HCP) are appropriately immunized to protect everyone in the hospital. Each year influenza infections are estimated to cause millions of illnesses and thousands of hospitalizations and deaths. It is crucial that all HCP are up-to-date with vaccinations to protect themselves, their patients, and their colleagues from preventable diseases such as influenza and pertussis.

The 2018-2019 influenza season was moderately severe and had two distinct waves of influenza activity corresponding to different influenza A viruses that were circulating. This led to a change in the composition of the 2019-2020 influenza vaccine. According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) Influenza Hospitalization Surveillance Project, which collects influenza hospitalization data in five Michigan counties, there were 926 reported hospitalizations for the 2018-2019 season. The CDC estimates that, for the 2018-2019 flu season, up to 647,000 hospitalizations and between 34,400 and 61,200 deaths occurred nationwide. [In Michigan](#), three influenza-associated pediatric deaths were confirmed for the 2018-2019 season.

The CDC recommends that all HCP receive an annual [flu vaccination](#). A [study](#) published in 2017 in *Clinical Infectious Diseases* indicated that flu vaccination reduced deaths, intensive care unit (ICU) admissions, ICU length of stay and overall duration of hospitalization among hospitalized flu patients. A previous [survey](#) of Michigan hospitals found that only 77 percent have implemented a mandatory flu vaccination policy for all HCP. Hospitals with a flu vaccination policy reported that their HCP flu vaccination coverage was 95 percent, compared to 67 percent among hospitals without a policy.

The CDC also recommends that all HCP receive a single dose of tetanus toxoid, reduced diphtheria toxoid and acellular pertussis ([Tdap](#)) vaccine to prevent transmission of pertussis. According to a [survey](#) conducted in 2016, only 41 percent of Michigan hospitals had mandatory Tdap vaccination policies. As of Sept. 18, 2019, Michigan has 320 reported cases of pertussis for 2019, highlighting the importance of more proactive approaches to ensure that HCP are protected against pertussis.

Vaccines remain the most effective way to protect HCP and their patients from many potentially harmful diseases. This is especially significant in 2019, when 1,241 cases of measles have been confirmed [to date](#) nationally, the greatest number of cases reported since 1992. Most of the cases are among people who were not vaccinated against measles. Michigan has had 46 confirmed cases for 2019.

Talking points on HCP vaccination for influenza and pertussis, as well as sample policies for influenza and other immunizations, including Tdap, for newly hired HCP and for current HCP are [available](#) to assist in reviewing your facility's vaccination policies and taking action. Questions should be directed to Brittany Bogan at the MHA at (517) 323-3443.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Peters".

Brian Peters  
Chief Executive Officer  
Michigan Health & Hospital Association

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joneigh Khaldun".

Joneigh Khaldun, MD, MPH, FACEP  
Chief Medical Executive  
Chief Deputy Director for Health  
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services