



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
Nov. 17, 2009

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H1N1 Flu Vaccine Available for More Priority Groups
Department of Health Also Reminds Parents That Children 9 and Younger Need Two Doses

BISMARCK, N.D. –Local public health units and private providers who have adequate H1N1 vaccine supplies now may begin vaccinating anyone included in the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) priority groups, according to Molly Sander, Immunization Program manager for the North Dakota Department of Health.

The ACIP priority groups include (in no particular order):

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

“Vaccine continues to slowly arrive in the state and the good news is that some areas have adequate vaccine to start vaccinating in all the priority groups,” Sander said. “But it’s important for people to realize that it will vary in different parts of the state. In some areas, the health units and private providers may have to continue prioritizing further because of a limited supply of vaccine.”

The Department of Health also wants to remind parents that children age 6 months through 9 years need two doses of H1N1 vaccine separated by at least four weeks. That means many children who were vaccinated in October are getting close to needing their second dose.

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“Studies have shown that kids 9 years and younger do not develop full immunity after just one dose,” said Sander. “It’s very important that children age 6 months through 9 years who receive H1N1 vaccine go back and receive a second dose at least four weeks later. Younger children who receive just one dose of vaccine are not fully protected until they receive their second dose.”

The number of influenza cases reported to the Department of Health continues to rise each week, with the total now reported at 2,965. It is estimated that about 92 percent of the influenza circulating in North Dakota is H1N1.

The North Dakota Department of Health has activated a toll-free public health hotline for people to call if they have questions about influenza. (The hotline cannot provide medical advice to callers. For that information, people should call their physicians.) The number to call is 1.866.207.2880. The hotline is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Central Standard Time. Information about influenza also is available on the Department of Health’s influenza website at www.ndflu.com.

For more information, the media can contact Molly Sander at 701.328.2378.

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