

# MaineHealth

*Weekly H1N1 Newsletter*  
**January 8, 2010**

*Welcome to the MaineHealth H1N1 Weekly Update Newsletter*  
*A Publication of the MaineHealth H1N1 Workgroup*

## **In This Issue:**

- Maine CDC Update – Pages 2-3
- Health Care Providers Update – Pages 4-5
- Important Resources – Page 5
- Publisher's Contact Information – Page 5

## **Quick Hits:**

- Flu activity in Maine has decreased enough to be classified as “regional” instead of “widespread.”
- Nearly 800,000 cumulative doses of H1N1 vaccine have arrived in Maine since October, meaning there is sufficient vaccine to cover all target populations and approximately 60% of all Maine citizens. There is an abundant supply of nasal spray vaccine in the state. Maine CDC requests that nasal spray vaccine be given to anyone who is eligible to receive it. If there is not sufficient supply in your area, continue to vaccinate target populations first.
- The only vaccines that should be returned are those that arrive non-viable or appear to be damaged during transit. **Providers with concerns about vaccine viability during transit from the McKesson Distributor should call 877-836-7123 immediately upon receipt of the package.**
- Health care providers who have sufficient supplies and no longer need vaccine they receive should contact their local vaccine coordinator to arrange for redistribution. Vaccine coordinator contact information is listed in the Health Care Providers Section of this newsletter.
- Maine CDC's Immunization Program has filled all of its orders for seasonal flu vaccine, and is unable to place additional orders for vaccine. Websites are listed below for more information.
- A new fact sheet on the safety of Thimerosal in flu vaccine has been developed by the US CDC. For more information on Thimerosal and its safety, visit: [General Questions and Answers on Thimerosal](#).

## **Maine CDC Update:**

Flu activity in Maine has decreased enough to be classified as “regional” instead of “widespread.”

This week’s statistics:

- **Deaths:** There was 1 death reported over the past week. An Aroostook County resident in the 50 to 64 age group died earlier this week in part due to complications related to H1N1.
- **Hospitalizations:** There were 5 new hospitalizations due to H1N1 last week, up from 3 the week before. Two children under age 18 were hospitalized, with one in intensive care; one young adult under age 24 was hospitalized and in intensive care; and two adults under age 65 were hospitalized. Hospitalizations occurred in Aroostook, Hancock, and Penobscot counties.

**H1N1 Vaccine Supply and Prioritization:** Nearly 800,000 cumulative doses of H1N1 vaccine have arrived in Maine since October, which is an increase of 300,000 in just the last 2 ½ weeks! This means that there is sufficient vaccine to cover all target populations and provides enough vaccine to cover approximately 60% of all Maine citizens.

The Maine CDC **recommends that all health care providers offer H1N1 vaccine to every patient at every visit, every hospitalization, or other health care encounter, assuming contraindications do not exist. Such strategies as standing orders and adding H1N1 vaccine status to intake and discharge questions are appropriate to consider. It is important to take advantage of this window of opportunity (declining disease burden and expanded vaccine supply) to encourage vaccine.**

There is an abundant supply of nasal spray vaccine in the state. Maine CDC requests that nasal spray vaccine be given to anyone who is eligible to receive it. The nasal spray vaccine is a safe and effective vaccine option for healthy people ages 2 through 49 years old who are not pregnant. For more information on nasal spray vaccine, please see our Fact Sheet at: [http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/maineflu/LAIV\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/maineflu/LAIV_factsheet.pdf).

**Vaccine Return:** The only vaccines that should be returned are those that arrive non-viable or appear to be damaged during transit. **Providers with concerns about vaccine viability during transit from the McKesson Distributor should call 877-836-7123 immediately upon receipt of the package.**

**Once a provider takes receipt of the vaccine as a usable product, it is that provider’s responsibility to ensure proper disposal of any damaged, expired, or un-used vaccine unless it has been recalled.** Health care providers who have sufficient supplies and no longer need vaccine they receive should contact their local vaccine coordinator (listed above) to arrange for redistribution.

**Changes in Ancillary Supply Kits:** As supplies of Influenza Vaccination Record cards are exhausted, US CDC will no longer be including vaccination record cards in shipments of H1N1 vaccine.

**Seasonal Flu Vaccine:** Maine CDC's Immunization Program has filled all of its orders for seasonal flu vaccine, and is unable to place additional orders for vaccine. There have been several national delays in privately supplied seasonal flu vaccine, and more demand for this vaccine than usual. Limited amounts of seasonal flu vaccine remain. Providers who are seeking more information about seasonal flu vaccine availability and ordering may check these web sites: <http://www.preventinfluenza.org/ivats/> and <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/vaccination/#supply>.

**Conference Call for Partners Holding Public Vaccine Clinics:** A conference call to address questions regarding expectations of partners who have agreed to host H1N1 vaccine clinics and receive funding from Maine CDC to support those efforts will be held at noon on **Monday, Jan. 11**. The call-in number is 1-800-244-5901 with the pass code 749239. Representatives of hospitals, health centers and schools will be invited to join this discussion. During the call, please press \*6 to mute your line and to un-mute when you are actively participating.

**Health Care Providers:**

Vaccine supply continues to increase in Maine and the Maine CDC is continually distributing supplies to providers.

- **If local vaccine supplies are not sufficient while awaiting more vaccine, the Maine CDC recommends focusing the limited supply on those patients in the five high priority groups** (pregnant women, people ages 6 months through 24 years-old, people 25 through 64 years-old with an underlying medical condition, caregivers and household contacts of infants younger than 6 months, and health care workers). Patients can also be referred to public clinics which can be found by calling 211 or checking [www.maine flu.gov](http://www.maine flu.gov).
- **When a health care provider's vaccine supply is sufficient, the CDC recommends that the provider offer vaccine to every patient at every visit, so long as there are no contraindications for receiving vaccine.** It is important to take advantage of this window of opportunity (declining disease burden and expanded vaccine supply) to encourage vaccination.
- Health care providers who have sufficient supplies and no longer need the vaccine that is being shipped to them should **contact their local vaccine coordinator to arrange for redistribution.**

**Vaccine Coordinators:**

District 1 – York:

Sharon Leahy-Lind, 490-4625, [sharon.leahy-lind@maine.gov](mailto:sharon.leahy-lind@maine.gov)

District 2 – Cumberland:

Becca Matusovich, 797-3424, [becca.matusovich@maine.gov](mailto:becca.matusovich@maine.gov)

District 3 – Western Maine:

MaryAnn Amrich, 753-9103, [maryann.amrich@maine.gov](mailto:maryann.amrich@maine.gov)

(Franklin, Oxford, and Androscoggin counties)

District 4 – Mid Coast:

Jen Gunderman-King, 596-4278, [jennifer.gunderman-king@maine.gov](mailto:jennifer.gunderman-king@maine.gov)

(Waldo, Knox, Lincoln, and Sagadahoc counties)

District 5 – Central Maine:

Sue Lee, 592-5634, [susan.j.lee@maine.gov](mailto:susan.j.lee@maine.gov)

(Somerset and Kennebec counties)

District 6 – Penquis:

Jessica Fogg, 592-5633, [jessica.fogg@maine.gov](mailto:jessica.fogg@maine.gov)

(Penobscot and Piscataquis counties)

District 7 – Downeast:

Al May, 263-4975, [alfred.may@maine.gov](mailto:alfred.may@maine.gov)

(Washington and Hancock counties)

District 8 – Aroostook:

Stacy Boucher, 592-5632, [stacy.boucher@maine.gov](mailto:stacy.boucher@maine.gov)

Tribal Vaccine Coordinator:

Jerolyn Ireland, 532-2240, Ext. 15, [jireland@maliseets.com](mailto:jireland@maliseets.com)

**Fact Sheet on Thimerosal in H1N1 Flu Vaccine:**

A new fact on the safety of Thimerosal in flu vaccine has been developed by the US CDC. For more information on Thimerosal and its safety, visit: [General Questions and Answers on Thimerosal](#).

**Public Vaccine Clinics:** Many public clinics have been scheduled for January.

For the most up to date information please see the clinic locator at:

[www.maine flu.gov](http://www.maine flu.gov). If you are running a public clinic, please make sure to document it on the Maine CDC clinic locator. **Please see the attached flier for vaccine clinics in the Greater Portland area through January 14, 2010.**

**Important Resources:**

- [www.maine flu.gov](http://www.maine flu.gov): – the most comprehensive information available regarding clinics, vaccine supply and other healthcare provider information
- **Health Care Providers' Clinic Consultation Line: 1-800-821-5821**, available 24 hours per day
- **Public Information and Referral Line: 211**, available now 8 am – 8 pm 7 days per week (note that this has changed from a Maine CDC phone number)
- **Vaccine Coordinators** – listed above

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