



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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**DOH PLACES FIRST ORDER FOR 2009 NOVEL H1N1 INFLUENZA
VACCINE AND LAUNCHES NEW INFORMATIONAL WEBSITE**

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) began placing orders today with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for 2009 Novel H1N1 Influenza vaccine. The CDC has approximately 3 million initial doses of nasal-spray flu vaccine LAIV (FluMist®) available to the nation in this first series of shipments to all states that place orders. These initial shipments are expected to arrive during the week of October 5.

“These initial shipments of H1N1 vaccine will be used to protect emergency medical service personnel, first responders and healthcare workers,” said Health Director Chiyome Fukino, M.D. “The State will follow CDC guidance and give first priority to high-risk groups that may be more vulnerable to serious complications from the H1N1 flu.”

In accordance with CDC guidelines, the DOH will give first priority to the following high-risk groups for H1N1 vaccination:

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

(more)

Hawai'i hospital facilities will be some of the first to receive the novel H1N1 vaccine to immunize their healthcare workers. The DOH is also working on other avenues of distribution that will include pre-registered primary care physicians; community vaccinators such as retail pharmacy chains and community health clinics; and school-located vaccination clinics scheduled to begin in November.

According to the CDC, the first H1N1 vaccine doses received by all states will be the nasal spray live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) or FluMist®. This form of vaccine is recommended for children two years of age or older and adults up to 49 years of age. It is not recommended for pregnant women or individuals with underlying medical conditions such as asthma. In addition to LAIV, injectable vaccine doses will be available in weekly shipments to states beginning in mid-October.

The CDC estimates 10 million to 20 million doses of both forms of vaccine will be available for distribution nationwide each week after the first week in October. Hawai'i was allocated 14,400 doses of vaccine to be able to draw from with its first order. H1N1 vaccine allocations can and most likely will come multiple times during the course of a week, so H1N1 allocation numbers will change frequently.

Beyond the high-risk groups who will be targeted initially to receive the H1N1 vaccine, the DOH will be encouraging everyone to get vaccinated as it becomes more widely available. Meanwhile, everyone can continue to help stop the spread of influenza by getting their seasonal flu vaccination and through simple yet effective methods like covering your cough, washing your hands frequently, and staying home if you are sick.

The DOH has launched a new website dedicated solely to information on influenza and the H1N1 vaccine in Hawai'i. The website is accessible at hawaii.gov/health/about/H1N1.html and will include the latest information available on the H1N1 vaccine, when and where it will be available. The public may also receive the updates on H1N1 vaccine availability by following the DOH on Twitter, at twitter.com/HIgov_Health. Information on 2009 Novel H1N1 influenza is also available by calling Aloha United Way's 2-1-1 helpline.

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