

Delaware General Health District

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NEWS RELEASE

DELAWARE GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT WEEKLY INFLUENZA UPDATE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DELAWARE, OH, December 18, 2009 –This is the weekly flu update issued by the Delaware General Health District.

The new online appointment scheduling system for our H1N1 immunization clinics was put into use this week, and is working well. In less than seven days, 3,269 appointments have been scheduled. Of those, 2,723 clients were able to set their own appointments without assistance from the Health District staff. We have worked with the scheduling system vendor throughout the week to promptly deal with the few glitches which have arisen. We also have assisted nearly 500 persons who phoned seeking appointments.

Also working very well is the new immunization clinic location, Grady Memorial Hospital's Delaware Health Center at 801 OhioHealth Boulevard. We provided 1,040 H1N1 immunizations during our first two clinic days there. Most clients this week have had little or no waiting time, and have found the location to be convenient.

“Grady’s offer of assistance is greatly appreciated,” said Health Commissioner Frances Veverka MPH R.S. Due to traffic concerns, the Health District was not able to use the Grady facility until the appointment system was implemented.

We expect to continue using the Delaware Health Center throughout the winter months. Our weekly schedules will continue to include evening and weekend opportunities to get the H1N1 vaccine. Our vaccine stocks remain ample.

As expected, numerous senior citizens and healthy adults have gotten immunizations this week with the lifting of eligibility restrictions for the H1N1 vaccines. We also are continuing to

see a lot of families returning for their children under 10 to get second doses. Children under 10 need to get a booster dose of H1N1 vaccine at least 28 days after their initial dose.

We will welcome college students at our H1N1 immunization clinics while they are home on winter break. Most college students are considered at high risk because of the close contact they have with others in group housing and classrooms.

As of Dec. 17, the Delaware General Health District has given a total of 12,851 H1N1 immunizations. Our immunization clinic sites have been in the four largest school districts in Delaware County, and we have provided special clinics for local EMTs, pregnant women, developmentally disabled persons, and firefighters and police officers. We are providing vaccine to a growing number of medical offices.

There is no charge for H1N1 immunizations from the Delaware General Health District. Several businesses are expected to start offering the immunizations in the near future and will be charging service fees.

CLINIC SCHEDULE: Our upcoming clinics are scheduled for:

- Saturday, Dec. 19, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
- Monday, Dec. 21, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, Dec. 22, from 11:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Dec. 23, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
- Monday, Dec. 28, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, Dec. 29, from 11:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Dec. 30, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

All clinics are by appointment only. To make an appointment, log on to www.delawarehealth.org and follow the links or instructions. We suggest you read the “Helpful Hints” before you try to schedule your appointment. Persons without Internet access should call the Health District at 740-368-1700 or HelpLine at 2-1-1 or 1-800-684-2324.

The Delaware General Health District has exhausted all of its seasonal flu vaccine supplies.

LOCAL CASES: Two new local cases were confirmed this week, a husband and wife who were both hospitalized. A child in the same family suffered a flulike illness earlier.

SENTINEL SITES AND OTHER SURVEILLANCE: The number of people being seen by healthcare providers due to ILI continues to be higher than last year. Sales of over-the-counter medications and items to treat flu have returned to normal levels.

VACCINE RECALL: The vaccine manufacturer Sanofi Pasteur this week voluntarily recalled some H1N1 vaccine for children up to age 3 packaged in pre-filled syringes. The non-safety recall was undertaken because tests showed the vaccine's potency had dropped below standards. The vaccines posed no safety hazards, and CDC experts said they probably induced immunity to H1N1 as intended. Our agency returned 400 of the recalled doses as soon as the recall was announced. Two of the doses were used at Health District clinics before the recall was announced, and the Health District notified both recipients' parents.

HOLIDAY TRAVEL ADVICE: The Delaware General Health District urges county residents to take the following steps to be healthy this holiday season:

- Travel only when you are well.
- Wash your hands often. That can be with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with tissues or with your sleeve.
- Get immunized against flu, particularly if you're in a targeted population. If you're if one of the groups recommended for either the seasonal or H1N1 flu vaccine, stay informed about where you can be immunized in your community.