



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

201 W. Preston Street • Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Martin O'Malley, Governor – Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor – John M. Colmers, Secretary

January 29, 2010

Dear Community-Based Organizations:

NOTICE: The H1N1 (Swine) Flu Vaccine is Available to the General Population

The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) has been conducting intensive activities to prevent and manage H1N1 (Swine) flu among priority population groups. Over two million vaccine doses have been distributed throughout the State, but more people need to be informed and vaccinated before the flu season ends in April 2010. Although new cases are declining and the media has turned its attention away, H1N1 (Swine) flu is still a concern in Maryland and yet another wave of H1N1 illness could occur in the months ahead. Maryland, along with the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and many other states, has made *the vaccine available to all populations*. See Governor Martin O'Malley's press release that is attached.

This letter announces an ***ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITY*** to local organizations and community groups who would like an *H1N1 (Swine) Flu Vaccine Clinic* held at your location and offered to your constituents.

H1N1 (Swine) flu is not an illness to be ignored. It can be especially serious for certain people who are in the top priority to get vaccinated. These groups include:

- All individuals from six (6) months of age through twenty-four (24) years of age;
- Persons aged 25 through 64 years of age who have certain chronic diseases (asthma, diabetes, heart disease, serious immune or nervous system problems, those who are over-weight, etc.);
- Persons who care for children under six (6) months of age either in day-care or at home;
- Pregnant women; and
- Emergency medical and health care workers.

The H1N1 (Swine) flu vaccine is safe and effective. It is the best way to prevent getting H1N1 (Swine) flu. It is important that all Marylanders, especially those in the priority groups listed above, have an easy, convenient and free or low-cost way to get vaccinated. The goal is to vaccinate *all Marylanders* who seek to be protected by getting the vaccine.

TO ACCESS THIS ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITY:

1. Community groups should establish that you have a group of individuals who are interested and will appear at a future scheduled clinic at your location.
2. Confirm that you have a communication system that can reach the interested individuals with details of the vaccine clinic location and time. Project the number of persons who will attend. This information is important in requesting sufficient vaccines for the clinic.
3. Contact your Local Health Officer, who is the designated professional in charge of the H1N1 Flu program in your jurisdiction. The staff at your local health department will review the logistics of scheduling a vaccine clinic at your location. Be aware that this process has several steps including ordering the vaccine from the CDC in Atlanta, Georgia and delivery to the local health department and other vaccine sites in Maryland. Your clinic could take 5 to 10 days to be scheduled. Much patience has been required by all in this process.
4. If needed, the State has established a Community Partner Agreement which can be used to clarify the relationship and responsibilities of your community group and the Local Health Department in conducting vaccine clinics at your location for your constituents.

Attached to this letter is more H1N1 (Swine) Flu information and contact information for the Maryland local health department offices. You should contact your local health department to make arrangements.

Thank you for your dedication to the health of Marylanders. Working together we can make Maryland the healthiest state in the nation.

Sincerely,

Frances B. Phillips

Frances B. Phillips, RN, MHA
Deputy Secretary for Public
Health Services

Sincerely,

Renata J. Henry

Renata J. Henry
Deputy Secretary for Behavioral
Health & Disabilities

cc: Maryland Local Health Officers
Greg Reed, Immunization Program

Attachments