

MANDATORY FLU VACCINATIONS FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS

On July 23, the State Hospital Review and Planning Council passed an emergency regulation requiring flu vaccinations for healthcare workers as a condition of employment. According to the Department of Health, the regulation is worded so as to apply to vaccinations for H1N1 as well as seasonal flu. The regulation applies to all personnel with direct patient contact, as well as to any worker whose activities could pose a risk of flu virus transmission to patients and/or to personnel with direct patient contact. The only exception is for persons for whom a physician or nurse practitioner has certified that such a vaccination would be detrimental to that person's health and for persons with no or infrequent/incidental patient contact. In those cases, the healthcare facility must evaluate and implement steps to reduce the risk of transmissibility, e.g., by reassignment, use of masks, etc.

PRELIMINARY PRIORITY GROUPS FOR H1N1 VACCINE

This afternoon, the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices issued preliminary recommendations for target populations and priority lists for H1N1 vaccination.

The Committee recommended vaccination for these population groups (approximately 141,000,000 people):

- Pregnant women
- Household contacts of children under 6 months old
- Healthcare and emergency medical workers
- Children and young adults between 6 months and 24 years of age
- Non-elderly adults (25 - 65 years old) with underlying health conditions that put them at greater risk of complications from flu

The Committee emphasized that it was in the public health interest for all people in the target populations to receive vaccinations. However, if supplies are very limited, the Committee recommended this order of prioritization of the target populations (approximately 41,000,000 people):

- Pregnant women
- Household contacts of children under 6 months old
- A subset of healthcare and emergency medical workers that provide direct patient care
- Children from 6 months through 4 years of age
- Children and adolescents from 5 through 18 years of age with underlying health conditions

CHILDREN IN DISASTERS CONFERENCE

The New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene is sponsoring a "Children In Disasters" Pediatric Preparedness Conference to be held on September 15 at the Baruch College Conference Center. The agenda will include many areas of pediatric disaster planning and also address the impact of H1N1 Influenza on the pediatric patient population. Visit www.nycpedsprepared.com for more information and to register.

FLU PREVENTION PSA CONTEST

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is sponsoring a YouTube flu prevention video contest with a \$2500 prize. For more information and complete contest rules, visit <http://www.flu.gov>. Deadline for submissions is August 17.