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Oregon Public Health launches new Web site and social media tools

As the weather turns wet and cold and flu season ramps up, Oregon Public Health Division wants Oregonians to know that the very latest flu information is right at their fingertips. Since September 1, more than a thousand people in Oregon have been hospitalized with the H1N1 flu, and seasonal flu hasn't even arrived yet, so Oregon Public Health launched a new Web site: www.flu.oregon.gov. With more people turning to the Web to keep in touch, Oregon Public Health also offers two new social media tools: Facebook.com/FluOregon and Twitter.com/FluOregon.

"We want people to get the latest flu information from the comfort of their own homes or when they're on the go," says Mel Kohn, M.D., M.P.H., director of Oregon Public Health Division. "Now Oregonians can access information with these new tools, whether visiting the Web site on their home computer or viewing updates from a social media tool on their mobile phone."

The new and improved www.flu.oregon.gov Web site has been expanded to help Oregonians get through the flu season. The site offers 24-7 access to a complete range of flu and vaccination information from prevention to care including:

- The latest Oregon H1N1 and seasonal flu news;
- A vaccine locator;
- Helpful information for individuals, families, businesses, health professionals and schools;
- A tool to help determine if you are in the vaccine target group;
- A comprehensive business toolkit complete with posters and planning help;

- Fiona Flufighter educational materials for children;
- Useful links including the Oregon Flu Facebook page;
- Oregon Public Health flu hotline's most frequently asked questions.

Oregon Public Health has also begun a television advertising campaign to inform Oregonians about flu prevention. Watch "The Gift" here: (<http://www.flu.oregon.gov/Pages/thegift.aspx>).

The Oregon Public Health Flu Hotline at 1-800-978-3040 is a good resource for people needing information on where to find seasonal or H1N1 vaccine. The state has also added a team of specially trained nurses to the hotline to answer questions about symptoms and other flu-related medical question.

"One of the most powerful tools to fight against the flu is accurate and timely information," says Dr. Kohn. "That's why we have put together an array of communications channels for Oregonians to get the latest news on H1N1 in our state."

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Oregon Public Health Division Mission: To protect and promote the health of all the people of Oregon.