

Oregon Public Health Connection

An e-bulletin co-produced by the Oregon Public Health Division, DHS, and the Conference of Local Health Officials

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Top Priority:

SPECIAL EDITION: Community Response to H1N1 Influenza

This edition of the Public Health County Bulletin focuses on updates provided from various parts of the state regarding the recent state and local responses to the H1N1 influenza. For the latest information including H1N1 vaccine county locations, and to sign up for regular updates, please visit: <http://www.flu.oregon.gov/>



Pictured: CDC developed diagnostic test to detect novel H1N1 virus. (Photo courtesy Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.)

H1N1 flu vaccine

The vaccine to protect against pandemic H1N1 flu has begun flowing slowly into Oregon, with additional allocations arriving each week. As of Oct. 16, it was anticipated that Oregon would have received 79,500 doses. Approximately 75 percent of the vaccine received so far has been nasal spray mist, but injectable vaccine for various target populations is beginning to arrive as well. So far the vaccine is being reserved for those at highest risk of complications from pandemic H1N1 flu. These include:

- All those aged 6 months to 24 years,
- Pregnant women,
- People caring for or living with infants under 6 months of age,
- People aged 25 to 64 with underlying medical conditions,
- Health care workers, emergency medical responders and law enforcement personnel.

Public Health officials say that eventually the state should receive enough vaccine for everyone who wants it.

Continued on page 4



Douglas County Public Health works with community partners like local firefighters to share information about flu prevention. (Photo courtesy Douglas County Public Health.)

Douglas County reaches out to community

Douglas County Public Health has enrolled more than 50 physicians, hospitals, pharmacies, EMS and mass immunizers (e.g., grocery store immunization clinics) to provide H1N1 vaccine to county residents. Initial shipments of H1N1 FluMist vaccine were shipped to local providers that employ healthcare workers and emergency medical services personnel that provide direct patient care of ill persons. Second shipments of H1N1 vaccine were distributed to enrolled providers who serve the initial target groups, including some that provide prenatal care and provide health care to children. As more vaccine becomes available, it will continue to be sent to the providers that best serve the initial target populations. When public clinics are scheduled, they will be advertised through local media, at Oregon SafeNet, 1-800-SafeNet, and at local pharmacies. Douglas County Public Health plans to contract with one or more mass immunizers to provide multiple vaccine opportunities in a variety of settings.



Sparky the Fire Dog helps spread the word about handwashing. (Photo courtesy Douglas County Public Health.)

Douglas County Public Health has met with community partners twice weekly since August to monitor needs and coordinate planning. Communications liaisons from hospitals, schools, emergency response, and other entities have been brought together to help ensure consistent and accurate information dissemination. In addition to television and radio interviews, Public Health has taken advantage of local opportunities to share planning and prevention information – at meetings with school superintendents, drug prevent coalition meetings, hospital presentations, and various community events. Recently, Douglas County Public Health attended local Walk & Bike To School events to encourage children and adults to cover their cough, wash their hands, stay home when they are sick and be immunized. Information was made available by community dignitaries including Smokey Bear, Sparky the Fire Dog, and others at a Fire Prevention Week fair at the Home Depot Store in Roseburg.

(Information provided by: Karen Vian, R.N., Douglas County Communicable Disease & Immunization Program; Marilyn Carter, PhD., Douglas County Public Health Promotion.)

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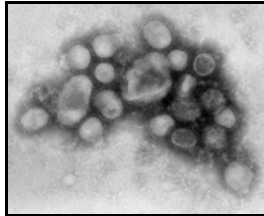
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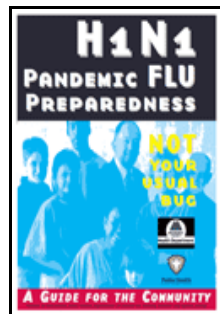
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The image of the newly identified H1N1 influenza virus was taken in the CDC Influenza Laboratory.



Baker County photo courtesy of Oregon State Archives.



Multnomah County has also made an H1N1 Flu Pandemic Preparedness Guide available to help families plan for a pandemic. It is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, and Vietnamese. The guide can be found at:
<http://www.mchealth.org/swineflu/>

The CDC has made a social media tool kit available (pictured at right) with various elements available including Blogs, Bloginars, Buttons, Content Syndication, eCards, Games and Email Updates. The tool kit can be accessed at:
<http://cdc.gov/SocialMedia/Tools/index.html>

Marion County opens Operation Center to monitor influenza

On Oct. 12, the Marion County Health Department (MCHD) opened their Department Operations Center to continue to monitor influenza activity in Marion County and to coordinate the distribution of flu vaccine and public information. Marion County has also been meeting regularly with all health care providers and hospitals in the Salem area as well as public information officers from the three Marion County hospitals, the Marion Polk Medical Society, the City of Salem, and neighboring Polk County. Through meeting with community partners, MCHD learned that people look to websites as a main source of information. Therefore, MCHD revamped their website to make it more user-friendly. The main part of the website is broken up into four categories: individuals/families, school/childcare, health care professionals, and employers/organizations. Marion County Health Department has developed a two-sided flyer titled "Worried About H1N1 Flu" that has been made available to all school districts in the county to give to children. The flyers also have been placed at area grocery stores, in food boxes via the Marion Polk Food Share that are distributed door to door by the Red Cross and CERT teams, and sent to each household who receives a property tax statement. Several MCHD administration staff members have been giving flu presentations to local businesses and service groups.

On Oct. 14, two Marion County school districts held the first H1N1 vaccine clinics. Marion County decided to send the initial shipments of vaccine out to hospitals, health care providers, schools, and emergency service providers. Marion County will soon be offering H1N1 vaccine clinics targeted toward residents of Marion County in the priority groups who do not have insurance or a medical provider, or who have been unable to get the vaccine from their regular medical provider. Once everyone who is in a priority group has had access to the vaccine, MCHD will make it available to the general public through local area health clinics, pharmacies, and at the health department.

Information provided by: Sara Fillion, Marion County Health Department, sfillion@co.marion.or.us

Baker County provides H1N1 web links

Baker County Health Department is monitoring H1N1 very closely in eastern Oregon and has put together web links in English and Spanish to keep its local community updated. These include the Oregon Public Health Hotline, H1N1 Flu and Oregon, questions and answers, how to care for someone with influenza, audio video resources, H1N1 flu in other countries, H1N1 and travel, and access to the CDC website including email updates and networking with the CDC.

Information provided by Baker County Health Department: www.bakercounty.org/health/h1n1.html

Multnomah County uses social media to help deliver messages regarding H1N1 to the community

When it comes to getting out important messages about H1N1 in as many ways as possible, Multnomah County decided to add social media to its arsenal of media venues. By using web 2.0 technologies, Multnomah County Health Department is making information available in a variety of ways so that people can get important messages the way they want it and when they need it. MCHD is using wikis, blogs, social networking, text messaging, videos and other on-line tools to share information with employees and the community. Employee questions started coming in early this summer about how to stay healthy and how to deal with work situations if they got sick, and we knew that an accessible information center would be necessary. However, we also knew that the information would change and grow as the flu season progressed. The central Human Resources (HR) department worked with the Health Department to create FAQ's specific to Multnomah County employees. At the same time, our IT department piloted a new Wiki platform. The editing features of the wiki allow the users to see what changes have been made when we are posting draft documents. The information is maintained by the Health Department, our central HR Unit and the Public Affairs Office and includes human resources policies and basic information on H1N1. We also provide an up-to-date list of resources and information.

There are many opportunities to reach community members through the use of Social Media. Multnomah County is using the CDC's Social Media Tool Kit as a resource and a model for communication. Social Media is one of many tools in our toolbox and gives us another means to disseminate our messages and get credible information to people the way they want it. The intent is that should we ever have an emergency, we will have another quick way to reach a number of people.

Information provided by: Tara Bowen-Biggs Communications Coordinator | Multnomah County Chair Ted Wheeler



PH: In the News

Student harassment rates going down (Marion County, OR.) – Student bullying and harassment rates are lower at the Woodburn School District than in other parts of the state, according to a recent survey. In Oregon's Health Teens Survey, released annually by the Department of Human Services, students said they were harassed at lower rates for things like race, ethnic origin, sexuality, weight, appearance, clothes and groups of friends. (Courtesy Woodburn Independent.)

Address the causes of toxic algae (Jackson County, OR.) – Four dogs died last month after swimming in the Umpqua River. The Mail Tribune reported that lab tests on one dog confirmed the death was due to toxic algae. (Courtesy Medford Mail Tribune, Medford, OR.)

Marijuana: States get the right -- federal government steps back from prosecuting medical users (Lane County, OR.) – Nearly 40,000 Oregonians who smoke or supply medical marijuana can breathe a little easier after receiving assurances from the Obama administration Monday that they will not face prosecution if they follow state laws that give them the right to use, grow or deliver a drug that is illegal under federal law. (Courtesy The Eugene Register-Guard, Eugene, OR.)

Pandemic H1N1 Influenza in the news in Oregon counties

Included is a sampling of recent news articles regarding influenza that have appeared in counties throughout the state.



[Benton County: Swine flu infects more than 200 OSU students](#)

"We've been seeing an increase every week since school started," said Phillip Histan, director of student health services at OSU. "We've gone up to about 200 cases in the last two weeks. Student health services had expected the number of infected students would increase as time went on. *Article courtesy of Oregon State University Daily Barometer, 10.19.09*

[Clackamas County: 30 percent of Oregon City school out sick](#)

Thirty percent of students at an Oregon City school were absent Tuesday, but it's too early to tell if the H1N1 virus is to blame. Doctors were awaiting tests for many of the illness cases reported at an Oregon City middle school. In addition to students, 9 teachers were out sick. So far, the school superintendent said that school district had no confirmed cases of H1N1, but schools are implementing precautions set forth by the Clackamas County Health Department. *Article courtesy of Fox 12 Oregon, 10.07.09*

[Clatsop County: County leaders need to be ready for an emergency](#)

Clatsop County Health employees are stretched. Even though staff is responding well to the H1N1 outbreak, the interim Clatsop County Health Department co-director warned the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners that her department is at an "absolute minimum capacity." The co-director told that board that the county is not under immediate threat. A declaration would only be necessary if hospitals ended up implementing their emergency management plans for a pandemic, then reached patient capacity. *Article courtesy of The Daily Astorian, 10.15.09*

[Josephine County: Declares swine flu emergency](#)

Josephine county declared a state of emergency over the swine flu, Oct. 23. The declaration by the county commissioners cited two people dead, 21 in the hospital, and many more sick with the virus. *Article courtesy of OregonLive.com, 10.23.09*

[Hood River County: Hospital announces precautions for H1N1](#)

In response to concerns about the seasonal and H1N1 flu viruses, Providence Health & Services is announcing a new set of visitation guidelines at its eight Oregon hospitals. The new guidelines are designed to protect the health of patients, families and visitors. These include limiting anyone who is sick or has flu symptoms from visiting the hospital. The visitation restrictions are temporary and will be reviewed for possible changes during the flu season. *Article courtesy of The Hood River News, 10.14.09*

[Jackson County: Flu calls overwhelm local sources](#)

Jackson County public health officials are being overwhelmed with calls from people seeking information about the H1N1 influenza virus and they are asking people to call the state influenza hotline. The state hotline is answered from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. The statewide toll-free hotline is (800) 978-3040.

Counselors will provide guidance about when to seek medical attention, based on information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Article courtesy of Medford Mail Tribune, 10.16.09*

[Umatilla County: Reports two flu deaths](#)

Public health officials in Umatilla County say the swine flu is "highly suspected" in the weekend deaths of a child and a middle-aged adult. Officials from the county's Public Health Division indicated that the pair was not related and both had serious underlying health issues.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicated that the state is one of many reporting widespread influenza activity. *Article courtesy of KTVZ.com, 10.12.09*

Battle of the Bugs: H1N1 vs. Seasonal

For more information see: <http://flu.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/acd/flu/h1n1vseasonal.shtml>

Seasonal: The seasonal flu is a virus that causes respiratory illness transmitted person to person. This flu comes around every winter, changing each year. Most people have some immunity to the seasonal flu, yet in the United States, flu causes an annual average of 226,000 hospitalizations and 36,000 deaths.

H1N1: Pandemic H1N1 (formerly known as swine flu) is a new influenza virus first detected in the U.S. in April 2009. It causes the same type of illness as seasonal flu, but very few people are immune to this virus strain.

PH Calendar

NOVEMBER 2009



The Role of the Public Health Code of Ethics in the Accreditation of Local and State Public Health Agencies

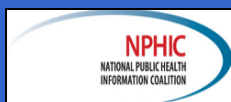
Web Conference Presenters: Alan Melnick, M.D., M.P.H., Health Officer, Clark County Public Health; Ruth Gaare-Bernheim, J.D., M.P.H., Associate Director, Institute for Practical Ethics and Public Life, University of Virginia, Co-Chair, PHLS Ethics Committee; Kathy Vincent, M.S.W., Staff assistant to State Health Officer, Alabama Department of Public Health, Past Chair of PHLS and member of Standards Workgroup of the Public Health Accreditation Board. Scheduled for 12 – 1 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 17, as a part of the Hot Topics in Preparedness series offered by the Northwest Center for Public Health Practice. Please pre-register prior to attending.



2009 Oregon Rural Health Conference
The ORHC is the largest gathering in Oregon dedicated to the important issues of rural health care. Conference is scheduled for Nov. 5 – 7, Gleneden Beach, OR.



2009 American Public Health Association Conference
The APHA Annual Meeting & Exposition is the oldest and largest gathering of public health professionals in the world, attracting more than 13,000 national and international physicians, administrators, nurses, educators, researchers, epidemiologists, and related health specialists. Conference is scheduled for Nov. 7 – 11, Philadelphia, PA.



The Oregon Public Health Connection has been recognized by the National Public Health Information Coalition for Excellence in Public Health Communication.

Pandemic H1N1 Influenza Update for Oregon, continued from page 1

Oregon's electronic H1N1 Vaccine Ordering System went live on Oct. 14. The site allows tribes, local health departments and state institutions to see how much vaccine has been allocated to their agency, order vaccine, reallocate vaccine to providers, and log transferred doses.

Seasonal flu vaccine

In some areas, seasonal flu vaccine is slow to arrive. Although some seasonal vaccine has been delayed, the CDC reports that 77 million doses (about 61 percent of the total expected to be available this flu season) has already distributed throughout the country. Delays are blamed on earlier-than-normal delivery and increased demands for seasonal vaccine. The total number of doses, approximately 114 million, which will be made this year, is about the same as the number of doses administered last year.

Most people will be able to obtain seasonal flu vaccine from their usual provider. It is still early in the flu season and there is plenty of time for people to be vaccinated.

Personal protective equipment

In response to concerns regarding limited availability of some personal protective equipment (PPE), the Public Health Division is making the state cache available for allocation to local agencies, including tribal health authorities, local health departments, and state institutions. Requests must be for the entire allocation of each type of PPE. For example, for a request for N-95 masks, the requesting agency will receive its full allocation of N95 masks, but will not be sent other types of PPE (i.e. gloves, gowns, etc.), unless ordered.

These supplies are part of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS), and are free to the requesting agency. Additional SNS personal protective equipment has been requested, but currently there is no guarantee that it will be available. The state also is in the process of purchasing additional masks from a private vendor to increase available supplies.

Antiviral medications

A state contract with a distributor to provide state-owned antiviral medicines through normal distribution systems on behalf of tribal health authorities, local health departments and state institutions is nearing completion. The umbrella contract would allow these entities to distribute some of their population-based allocations through existing distribution systems.

The state shipped 3,300 doses of pediatric suspension Tamiflu to tribes and local health departments that had ordered these supplies the week of Oct. 12.

The state also is completing contract negotiations with some community mass vaccinators. Again, the umbrella contract would allow tribal health authorities, and local health departments to distribute some of their allocations through the community mass vaccinators.

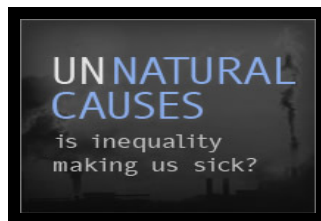
Public information

The Oregon Public Health Division has partially activated its Joint Information Center (JIC) to assist in implementing the division's Strategic H1N1 Communication Plan. The JIC is open from 8 a.m. to noon, Monday through Friday. The JIC can be reached by calling 971-673-2018.

The strategic communication plan includes an earned media plan for flu vaccine, outreach to communities with special information needs, and television and radio ads to encourage vaccination and other common-sense prevention measures, such as staying home when sick, covering coughs, and frequently washing hands.

The statewide toll-free hotline, (800) 978-3040, is operational Monday-Friday, 8AM-6PM. This service is available in multiple languages, including Spanish. Call volumes are increasing. County specific information about hotline calls is available. Please call Hotline Coordinator, Jeremy Van Keuren at (971) 673-0890 for more information.

Information provided by Oregon Public Health Emergency Preparedness, J. Christie Holmgren, Oregon Public Health Division, DHS.



To view a short trailer of the series, please visit www.unnaturalcauses.org and click on "The Documentary" prompt.

Hot Topics **Screenings, discussions of "Unnatural Causes"**

What are the social determinants of health and what affect do they have on our well-being? What can we do to understand and mitigate the social forces that hinder community resilience? How do poverty, inequity, and lack of mobility exclude groups of society from some of the most vital assets to good health?

Please take part in an upcoming free screening of *"Unnatural Causes: Is Inequity Making Us Sick?"* This series looks at the relationships between social status and health outcomes through seven focused episodes, mostly 30 minutes in length. DVD screening events will be held in a Portland State of Oregon Office Building conference room during lunch on a monthly basis. Contact jason.d.feldman@state.or.us or call 971-673-1153 for details.



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