

Administrator Alert

Policy updates & rule clarifications for Assisted Living, Residential Care & Nursing Facilities

Office of Licensing & Quality — Oregon Department of Human Services

October 2, 2009

H1N1 Action:

Facility Workers: High Priority for H1N1 Vaccination

A limited initial supply of H1N1 vaccine should start being available in Oregon shortly. Initially, the vaccine will be targeted for certain priority groups. Because of the increased risk of exposure and the need to have workers available to provide vital services, health care workers are in the initial priority group. Please note that unlike most years, clients (even those with chronic conditions) who are age 65 or older are **not** in the priority population for H1N1 flu vaccination.

Workers in the following facilities are considered “health care workers” and have priority access to the H1N1 vaccination:

- Nursing Facilities
- Assisted Living Facilities
- Residential Care Facilities
- Continuing Care Retirement Communities.

This alert gives instructions about getting the workers who are in the priority group vaccinated and should not include vaccination for residents who are age 65 and older or other groups not authorized by the local health department (such as office staff, families of workers, etc.) .

If the agency/facility has nurses available who could administer the vaccine, it is recommended that the agency/facility set up their own “flu clinic.”

This will involve

- contacting your local Public Health Department (attached is a list of local PH contacts),
- telling them the number of workers expected to consent to vaccination,



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- registering the nurse as a vaccine distributor,
- setting up and understanding the refrigeration needs of the vaccine, and then
- picking up the vaccine. It will come with the syringes and other supplies needed to administer the vaccine.
- If your refrigeration system is not certified for vaccines, unused vaccine must be returned to the local health department at the end of the day.
- Most ALF/RCFs do not have a “house doctor” available to sign the needed order. By a direct email, ALF/RCFs will receive a “standing order” signed by the SPD Medical Director, Tina Kitchin, MD. If you do not receive the standing order by 10/15, please contact her at Tina.c.kitchin@state.or.us

If the vaccine is not used as agreed upon with the local public health department, the vaccine must be returned to them.

If the agency does not have nurses available, please direct your staff to either their personal physician (some have agreed to administer the vaccine to their patients) or to public flu clinics sponsored by the local health department. Once they know when they will have the H1N1 vaccine, they will use public media and potentially their website to advertise the sites of the flu clinics. Workers should be warned that there may be an administration fee (usually \$15 or less) but no one will be turned away because of inability to pay. Medicare and/or Medicaid will pay the administration fee for those eligible for those programs who obtain their vaccination at the physician’s office.

If workers are sent to public flu clinics, it may be helpful to print this letter have them take it with them as proof that they are “health care workers.”

Attachments:

PH contact list

Q&A on Vaccination

