

## Pre-registration for Pharmacies for H1N1 Vaccines

The New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) is actively planning this fall's influenza response. While we can never accurately predict what kind of an influenza season we will have, the appearance of the novel H1N1 influenza this last spring presents new challenges. NMDOH cannot respond alone – **we need your support in planning for the fall influenza season.**

We invite retail pharmacies to partner with us in two ways: Distribute antivirals to customers who need the medication but cannot afford it, and/or receive H1N1 vaccine to administer to your customers.

### Antiviral Distribution

We encourage retail pharmacies to enter into an agreement with NMDOH to receive antivirals from the state stockpile for patients whose licensed provider prescribes it, but who cannot afford it. The prescribed antivirals will be provided without charge to the patient. These antivirals will be reserved for those patients who are uninsured or who are insured but are unable to cover the required co-pay.

Pharmacists receiving antivirals for distribution will be required to agree to the terms of the provider agreement and to track inventory and courses administered. NMDOH will be using the New Mexico Statewide Immunization Information System (NMSIIS) for this tracking.

The pre-registration form is attached. We are finalizing a provider agreement that will be required in order to receive vaccine or antivirals.

### Pandemic Influenza Vaccine

The best tool for mitigating the impact of an influenza epidemic is the timely administration of an effective vaccine. This fall, in addition to the seasonal flu vaccine that should be available as early as August, a second vaccine to protect against the new H1N1 influenza virus is expected to be available.

Five manufacturers have been contracted to produce pandemic influenza vaccine for this fall in both inactivated injectable and live attenuated nasal spray forms. Manufacturers will eventually produce enough vaccine to fully saturate US demand. The federal government plans to purchase and ship the vaccine at no cost to providers or recipients. An administration fee will be allowed under some circumstances. If supplies are initially limited, certain recipients may be prioritized. Once vaccine is widely available, those priorities will be dropped and vaccine will be encouraged for anyone who wants to be vaccinated.

This massive undertaking will require the active participation of a wide range of immunization providers in many venues (medical offices, public health, hospitals, pharmacies, home health, community immunizers, schools and other non-traditional venues). At this point, the federal government plans for state public health authorities to direct the shipments of all pandemic vaccine.

The New Mexico Department of Health invites pharmacists who are trained to vaccinate to pre-register to receive H1N1 vaccine. There is no cost to pre-register and registered providers are not committed to provide vaccine, but they will be engaged in the process and receive updates and vaccine planning information. They will have the opportunity to order vaccine as outlined by the final terms of the pandemic vaccination program.

Pre-registration will allow NMDOH to collect the shipping and contact information necessary for it to ship vaccine to the pharmacist. We will be using a system similar to the Vaccines for Children Program (VFC) for ordering and tracking vaccine. Screening will be done to assure that persons registering have active licenses in good standing in New Mexico; this is a normal part of the NMDOH authorization process. Pharmacists already enrolled in the federal VFC Program will automatically be included as potential recipients of H1N1 vaccine.

Vaccine will be ordered only for registered providers who agree to the terms of the provider agreement and return a completed order form for an initial supply. They will be given a unique provider number for the purposes of tracking/reporting, much like every VFC provider is given a VFC PIN. No guarantees will be made about the timing or size of individual shipments.

Providers must agree to report to NMDOH (as federally required) the number of doses administered, doses still on hand and additional doses requested. NMDOH will use the NMSIIS to track inventory and doses administered. We will provide training needed to use this system for those who are not currently using it.

The registration form is attached. We are finalizing a provider agreement that will be required in order to receive vaccine or antivirals.

Thank you for working with us to keep New Mexicans healthy!

