



# Weekly H1N1 Influenza (Swine Flu) Situation Update

October 2, 2009

## About this Weekly Update

This publication will be released weekly throughout fall 2009 and early winter 2010 to assist healthcare and emergency medical services organizations and personnel in preparing for and responding to Novel H1N1 Influenza (Swine Flu) in Southern Maine.

Each update will contain:

- Influenza surveillance data for U.S. and Maine
- Important dates of upcoming meetings, conference calls, and trainings
- Updated news and guidance regarding vaccination, testing, reporting, treatment, personal protection, etc.
- Strategies to keep you informed

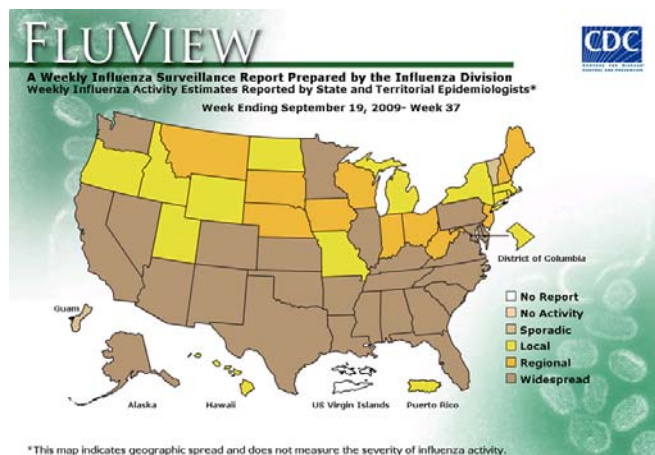
Remember that the best ways to protect yourself from flu are:

- **WASH** your hands
- **COVER** your cough
- **STAY HOME** if you're sick
- **GET VACCINATED**

View all *SMRRC H1N1 Influenza (Swine Flu) Situation Updates* (including archives) at: [www.smrrc.org](http://www.smrrc.org)

## Surveillance

US CDC reports that flu activity continued to increase in the US during the week of Sept. 13-19. Widespread influenza activity continues in much of the southern parts of the country, including higher than expected hospitalizations for this time of year. Outpatient visits for influenza like illness (ILI) increased in much of New England.



In Maine, visits to outpatient office settings and hospital emergency departments for influenza like illness increased this past week. There have been some occasional cases of H1N1 detected in students, but no new distinct outbreaks have been identified this past week. (Source: Maine CDC/DHHS, 9/24/09)

For more information on influenza disease activity, visit: [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/update.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/update.htm) (US); and [www.mainflu.gov](http://www.mainflu.gov) (ME)

## Important Dates

Maine CDC will be holding a conference call for all interested stakeholders on H1N1 vaccine efforts from 12:00-1:00 p.m. on Monday Oct. 5. The call-in number is 1-800-914-3396, pass code is 473623.

SMRRC is hosting a “Southern Maine Regional Influenza Preparedness and Response Meeting” on October 7, 2009, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Hilton Garden Inn, Freeport, ME. This meeting targets healthcare and EMS professionals with influenza decision-making roles within their organizations. **Registration is still OPEN:** [www.smrrc.org/Oct\\_7\\_Meeting.html](http://www.smrrc.org/Oct_7_Meeting.html)

Maine EMS, Mid-Coast EMS, Hospitals, and EMS Services in Midcoast Region are hosting a Maine EMS Medivax Training to assist in ongoing preparations for seasonal and H1N1 influenza vaccination planning needs. This program will meet the educational requirement for Intermediate and Paramedic level licensed providers for administering vaccinations (beyond forced protection) in the state of Maine. Providers that have completed this program may set up a vaccination program within established criteria in house or provide assistance to local programs open to the public, schools, etc. Instructor Coordinators must also complete this program in order to teach future Medivax programs as requested.

Scheduled as follows:

Oct. 6, 2009 – 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm – Miles Memorial Hospital (Board Rm.)

Oct. 7, 2009 – 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm – WCGH Ed. Center, Belfast

Instructors: Steve Leach EMT-P / RN & Infection Control Nursing Staff

[CEHs awarded – Cat. 4 – 1.5 hours; Cat. 5 – 0.5 hrs. No cost.]

This program is open to all Instructor Coordinators licensed at the Intermediate or Paramedic level, as well as Intermediate and Paramedic providers. Attendees should contact the office if they wish to attend the program so we may plan accordingly.

Questions – contact the MCEMS office at 7895-5000 or 323-0230.

## Updated News and Guidance

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) is still actively recruiting H1N1 vaccine distribution (ship-to) sites in Maine. H1N1 vaccine will only be available through state health departments (Maine CDC/DHHS in Maine), and will not be available for private purchase from manufacturers. Priority will be given to hospitals and healthcare practices serving patient populations included in the US CDC H1N1 Vaccine Priority Groups:

- All people from 6 months through 24 years of age;
- Household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age;
- Pregnant women;
- Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel; and
- People aged 25 through 64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza.

Completing the H1N1 Vaccine Provider Agreement is your way of demonstrating interest. If you are a licensed health care provider, and your agency/practice has not registered as an H1N1 Vaccine Provider, then please do so immediately. To register, complete and submit the H1N1 Vaccine Provider Agreement, found at: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/maineflu/h1n1/provider-agreement-2009-2010.shtml>

If you are aware that your agency/practice has already submitted an H1N1 Vaccine Provider Agreement, there is no need to do so again. Additionally, if your agency/practice is part of a larger medical group or practice organization please verify that a Provider Agreement has not already been submitted on your behalf. This is important because there are a limited number of H1N1 vaccine ship-to sites available.

Once the designated H1N1 Vaccine Provider ship-to sites are identified, Maine CDC will take orders for H1N1 vaccine. The H1N1 Vaccine Order Form will be included in the H1N1 Provider Confirmation Packet and online. In the meantime please assess the number of doses needed to vaccinate your priority patient and staff populations.

More information, including consent forms and billing information, will be found at: [www.maine.gov](http://www.maine.gov)

Updated CDC guidance on H1N1 influenza vaccine including vaccine handling: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination>

FAQ on H1N1 vaccine safety can be found at: [http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/vaccine\\_safety\\_qa.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/vaccine_safety_qa.htm)

For other questions: Contact the Maine CDC's Immunization Program at 287-3746 or the public information line at 1-888-257-0990; or Email questions at: [flu.questions@maine.gov](mailto:flu.questions@maine.gov)

A continuously updated FAQ for healthcare providers and EMS personnel, plus additional updates and planning documents, are accessible at: [www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/maineflu/h1n1/health-care-providers.shtml](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/maineflu/h1n1/health-care-providers.shtml)

An article was just published in JAMA indicating no difference in risks among tertiary care nurses in contracting influenza for those using surgical masks or N95 respirators, in a randomized trial (*JAMA*. 2009;302(17):(doi:10.1001/jama.2009.1466). Article available at: <http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/2009.1466v1?papetoc>

An accompanying editorial entitled “Respiratory Protection Against Influenza by Arjun Srinivasan, MD; Trish M. Perl, MD, MSc (*JAMA*. 2009;302(17):(doi:10.1001/jama.2009.1494), indicates that masks and respirators should be considered a last line of defense in the hierarchy of infection control; health care workers should be vaccinated against influenza in order to protect their patients and themselves, yet their vaccine rates are low; febrile patients should be quickly isolated and generally masked; “administrative controls” should be implemented; respiratory hygiene and hand washing measures should be strictly adhered to; and febrile health care workers should stay home and be encouraged to by the employers. – Thank you to Dr. Dora Mills for sharing these articles and for her analysis.

Healthcare workers who volunteer to provide vaccinations in school or community clinics must register with **MAINE RESPONDS** ([www.maineresponds.org](http://www.maineresponds.org)) to receive state liability protection. Maine Responds will verify the credentials of registered volunteers, and names of verified volunteers will be added to a list posted by Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) at: [www.maine.gov/mema](http://www.maine.gov/mema) If the volunteer is not on this list, he or she should not assume that they are covered by the Governor's declaration.



Healthcare workers who will administer vaccine as part of their regular employment are not required to register with Maine Responds, as liability coverage is traditionally provided by the employer for healthcare providers working within their normal scope of practice.

To date, the Maine Responds list contains 392 verified physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, and licensed practical nurses. Combined with the Maine EMS list, we have over 700 verified volunteer vaccinators identified statewide.

For additional information please contact Amanda Walker, Maine Responds Program Coordinator at (207) 662-5142 or by email at [walkea2@mmc.org](mailto:walkea2@mmc.org).

### Stay Informed

Maine CDC General Public Call-In Number: 1-888-257-0990 (M-F, 9-5)  
Maine CDC Healthcare Provider Disease Reporting and Information Line: 1-800-821-5821 (24/7)  
Maine CDC General Influenza Questions: [flu.questions@maine.gov](mailto:flu.questions@maine.gov)  
Maine CDC Medical/Clinical Influenza Questions: [disease.reporting@maine.gov](mailto:disease.reporting@maine.gov)  
Maine CDC H1N1 Information: [www.maineflu.gov](http://www.maineflu.gov)  
U.S. CDC H1N1 Information: [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu) and [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)



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