



CITY OF MELROSE

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Melrose/Wakefield Health Departments 2009-2010 H1N1 Influenza Plan August 27, 2009

(this plan will continually be updated as new information becomes available)

Initial Target Group

H1N1 vaccine is currently undergoing clinical trials and is anticipated to be available mid to late October. The initial target group for this vaccine includes:

- Pregnant women
- Household contacts of infants < 6 months of age
- Health care and emergency medical service personnel
- Children and young adults 6 months through 24 years of age
- People 25 – 64 with underlying health conditions (chronic pulmonary, cardiac, renal, metabolic, hematological disorders, immunosuppression)

This initial target group may be further prioritized if vaccine demand exceeds supply.

The first two cohorts will be addressed through ob/gyns and the delivering hospitals. The hospital will immunize their health care workers, and the Health Dept will immunize Melrose firefighters/emts. Cataldo Ambulance and Action Ambulance are in the process of deciding their distribution model.

The final cohort of the initial target group are children and young adults 6 months through 24 years of age. This group will require two separate vaccinations approximately one month apart (the final protocol will be decided at the end of the clinical trial). The Health Department, in conjunction with the School Departments, are planning public clinics to offer this vaccine to this cohort (free of charge) on two consecutive Saturdays the end of October followed by two additional ones at the appropriate time intervals. The Wakefield clinics will be held at the Field House; the Melrose clinics will be held at the Melrose Veterans Memorial Middle School. Residents of both communities are welcome at either location.

The clinics will be advertised through the 2 communities' School Departments' websites and local cable access stations, the general cable access stations, the government websites, local newspapers, flyers sent home with elementary students at both private and public schools. Other potential means of communication are the Melrose kiosk, 4 sandwich boards strategically placed in the communities, flyers put up in local businesses, and flyers included in grocery bags at the three major supermarkets in the communities.

Vaccine record cards will be given to all recipients for their and their healthcare providers' records.

The clinics will be staffed by school nurses, Hallmark Health nurses, volunteer nurses, and potentially staff from local physician offices.

Further vaccination cohorts

If vaccine supplies allow, the next cohort to be vaccinated will be people 25 – 64 years of age, and finally, people 65 and older. The vaccine is only available to the federal government who will distribute it to the states who will then further distribute it. In Melrose, this vaccine will be made available to the Health Department, Melrose-Wakefield Hospital and local physicians (at no cost).

If there is sufficient vaccine, public H1N1 clinics for adults will be scheduled. Potential sites in Melrose include Memorial Hall and the Knights of Columbus. The Milano Senior Center will be used if there is sufficient vaccine to immunize elders. In Wakefield, the Civic Center, Greenwood School, and the Senior Center are potential locations. These clinics will be free and will be staffed by registered nurses from the (Melrose) schools, Hallmark Health, and volunteer population with volunteer administrative people.

H1N1 and School Preparation

The Health Director has personally met with both school superintendents who have pledged their full cooperation. In addition, all private schools in both communities are being offered the same information and services (St. Mary's, St. Joseph's, Odyssey, SEEM, Nazareth).

Both school departments will be taking the following Action Steps to prevent the spread of flu:

- **Educating and encouraging students and staff to use good cough and sneeze etiquette.** Included in the annual teacher training at the beginning of the school year which normally includes universal precautions and epi-pen use will be a review of both cough/sneeze etiquette and hand washing. The latter two will be repeated to the elementary school students in assemblies.
- **Reminding students and staff to practice good hand hygiene.** Laminated signs will be posted above the sinks in all bathrooms (offered to private schools.)
- **Reminding students and staff to stay home if they are sick.** Laminated "Are You Sick" signs will be posted at the main entrance to all schools (offered to private schools). A parent letter will be posted on the website of each schools' website as well as the main school department website.

- **Send sick students and staff home** and give them written instructions that sick people cannot return until after they no longer have a fever or signs of a fever for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication)
- **Encourage early medical evaluation for sick students and staff** at higher risk of complications who get sick and will benefit from early treatment with antiviral medications. This will be accomplished through the teachers active surveillance of students and the School Nurses.
- **Have personal protective equipment (masks) at each nurses' office** for sick students to use while waiting to be picked up to go home. We do not have the physical facilities to have ill students separated in a separate room.
- **Thorough cleaning and disinfecting of the schools will be done on a regular basis.** Teachers will NOT be encouraged to bring in their own cleaners/disinfectants to avoid allergy and reactions by sensitized staff and students as well as to reduce the accumulated chemical load of the building

In addition, the Health Department will be producing two cable tv shows which will be shown in both Wakefield and Melrose. The first will discuss seasonal and H1N1 flu; the second will be specifically about H1N1 and the schools.

This information is consistent with that provided by the Mass Department of Public Health and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. www.flu.gov/plan