



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE
Thomas R. Frieden, MD, MPH

*** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO ALL PEDIATRIC, FAMILY PRACTICE AND OFFICE STAFF ***

January 21, 2009

Dear Colleague:

The Bureau of Immunization (BOI) has distributed more flu vaccine during the 2008 – 2009 flu season in New York City (NYC) to date than in any recent year. In spite of this, vaccine coverage remains unacceptably low, and many children are currently inadequately vaccinated against influenza. Ample supplies of vaccine are available to immunize all those who still need protection. At this time, influenza activity in NYC is sporadic, and widespread community transmission has not begun. Therefore, we strongly recommend that vaccination efforts continue through late spring.

Please continue to order sufficient vaccine to assure full protection of your patients. Providers enrolled in the Vaccines for Children Program (VFC) should use the attached updated **Seasonal Influenza Vaccine Order Form** for the remainder of the 2008 – 2009 season. The current influenza vaccine recommendations for children can be found on the order form. Additionally, VFC-enrolled providers will shortly receive their Citywide Immunization Registry (CIR)-generated patient up-to-date (UTD) and VFC doses administered reports (DAR) for the fourth quarter of 2008. For the first time, influenza coverage rates for the children in your practice will be included. Please use this report to identify and recall children still in need of immunization. You can identify these children by using the Online Registry (www.nyc.gov/health/cir) or by calling the CIR hotline at 212-676-2323. All doses of any vaccine administered to children <19 years of age in NYC must be reported electronically to the CIR; paper forms are no longer being accepted.

Providers needing vaccine for private patients will find contact information for vaccine manufacturers and distributors at the following link: www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/imm/imm-flu-vaccorderform.pdf.

In addition, BOI has FluMist® available at no cost to providers – for private or VFC patients. This vaccine must be collected at the DOHMH Public Health Laboratories at 455 First Avenue. Contact Angel Lapaz at 212-447-2574 to arrange for collection of vaccine.

For additional information about influenza, please refer to the following:

1. 2008 – 2009 ACIP Recommendations for the Prevention and Control of Influenza: www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr57e717a1.htm.
2. City Health Information: Influenza Prevention and Control, 2008 – 2009: www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/chi/chi27-8.pdf

For professional or clinical questions, please call BOI at 212-676-2259. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Jane R. Zucker, M.D., M.Sc.
Assistant Commissioner
Bureau of Immunization