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** NOTICE: This health alert provides written guidance for health care professionals and others who may need to take action to prevent or control a notifiable condition. It is not intended to provide guidance for the general public.*

H1N1 Pandemic Influenza Vaccine

Is H1N1 Pandemic Influenza Vaccine available?

An H1N1 vaccine has been developed and will be available in our community beginning mid-October. The Federal Government will ship vaccine to localities as it becomes available from the manufacturers. Initial shipments will be targeted to those most at risk of suffering severe illness from H1N1 Influenza to include: pregnant women, families and caregivers of infants less than 6 months of age, children 6 months of age to 4 years, and all children with underlying chronic medical conditions. Health care workers including first responders with direct patient contact are also included. As the Fall and Winter progress, there will be additional vaccine in the community for school-aged children and eventually for all those seeking it.

Who will be giving H1N1 Pandemic Influenza Immunizations?

Initially vaccine will be shipped to health care providers and hospitals serving those at risk (see above). Vaccine will also be available in the community through commercial vendors when it is not feasible for provider offices to give immunizations to targeted populations. As vaccine supplies increase, immunizations will be available in the community for school-aged children and others.

How can I be a provider of H1N1 Pandemic Influenza Immunizations?

The health department will communicate directly with health care providers, hospitals and pharmacies as systems are in place for allocating vaccine. If you are currently a vaccine for children (VFC) provider, you are automatically pre-registered. Other health care providers, hospitals and pharmacies can pre-register to become a H1N1 Pandemic Influenza Immunization provider through the following website: www.doh.wa.gov/swineflu/h1n1reg.htm

How will I know when H1N1 Pandemic Influenza Vaccine becomes available in this community?

The Mason County Public Health website will have up-to-date information on H1N1 Pandemic Influenza Vaccine in Mason County: www.co.mason.wa.us Available information will include those groups targeted to receive vaccine and immunization providers for the general public.