

Cook County Department of Public Health

Cook County Health & Hospitals System

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Stephen A. Martin, Jr., Ph.D., M.P.H.
Chief Operating Officer

September 25, 2009

Dear Health Professional:

We are writing to ask for your help with an important public health initiative. The Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) is the certified local public health department which serves most of suburban Cook County. As you undoubtedly know, health providers and federal, state and local health authorities are responding to an outbreak of novel influenza A (H1N1) virus which began circulating in the United States this past Spring. Since it first appeared, the H1N1 virus has caused illness, hospitalization and in some cases death.

Current seasonal influenza vaccines do not afford protection against H1N1. However, an H1N1 vaccine is expected to be available beginning in October 2009. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has categorized certain groups as high priority for the initial receipt of the H1N1 vaccine based on their high risk for developing serious complications if they become infected with the H1N1 virus. These priority groups include: pregnant women, persons aged 6 months through 24 years, caretakers of infants under 6 months of age, healthcare workers, and persons with underlying chronic health conditions.

Once vaccine supplies arrive, the CCDPH is planning to conduct H1N1 vaccination clinics in suburban schools to offer vaccinations to children in pre-kindergarten through eighth grades. We urgently need health professionals to assist with these vaccination efforts beginning in late October. We are most in need of licensed health professionals such as physicians, physician assistants, nurses, pharmacists, and emergency medical technicians (subject to state approvals regarding EMT vaccinators). Please consider volunteering your time to provide the H1N1 vaccine to help protect our children.

If you are interested in assisting with this important program, please take a few minutes to register to become a member of the Cook County Medical Reserve Corps. This can be accomplished by going to our website at www.cookcountypublichealth.org. You may register on-line or print out our Volunteer Packet. Alternatively, if you do not have access to a computer, you may call our Volunteer hotline at 708-492-2820 and request that a Volunteer Packet be mailed directly to you.

If you are a member of a large provider group that may be interested in providing a group of volunteers to serve a particular school, or if you have other ideas about how you can help us, or if you have any questions, please feel free to contact our Volunteer hotline at 708-492-2820 or e-mail us at volunteer@ccdph.net. Thank you for considering this request and we hope to work with you in helping to protect the health of children in our County.

Sincerely,

Stephen A. Martin, Jr. Ph.D., M.P.H.
Chief Operating Officer



BECOME A PUBLIC HEALTH VOLUNTEER!

Join the Cook County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)

The Cook County MRC is seeking medical and non-medical volunteers to help prepare for and respond to public health emergencies.

Healthcare Providers Needed to Help Vaccinate Against Novel H1N1 Flu This Fall and Winter 2009

CALLING ALL:

- advanced practice nurses
- emergency medical technicians (EMTs)
- licensed practical nurses
- pharmacists
- physicians
- physician assistants
- registered nurses

REGISTER TODAY:

ONLINE www.cookcountypublichealth.org/volunteer
EMAIL volunteer@ccdph.net
PHONE 708-492-2820

Be Aware.

Learn more about public health and help raise awareness about individual, family and community preparedness.

Get Prepared.

Train and practice your volunteer role in emergency preparedness drills and exercises, and provide feedback on community response plans.

Take Action.

Put your training and practice into action, helping with the following medical and non-medical roles during a real response: epidemiological investigations, dispensing medications and vaccinations, health education, and other supportive activities.

Be Aware. Get Prepared. Volunteer.