



URGENT: Information about use and availability of novel H1N1 Vaccine provided by the Department of State Health Services.

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for your work and your patience in the state-wide effort to mitigate the effect of H1N1 influenza in Texas. As you know, H1N1 vaccine supplies allocated to Texas in early October were less than anticipated. The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is distributing vaccine according to the recommendations of the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), however there is insufficient supply at this time to vaccinate all members of the priority groups. In addition to the recommendations of the ACIP, DSHS considers vaccine formulations (e.g., preservative free, live virus), packaging (e.g. single dose, multi-dose), geographic population, and the capacity of the distribution system to allocate vaccine.

While DSHS is *allocating* vaccine to providers based on the number of high priority patients they planned to vaccinate, providers are expected to use their clinical judgment when deciding on the most effective use of available vaccine supplies to serve their patients and community. DSHS will not discontinue providing vaccine nor will it limit future allocations based on decisions made by the clinician regarding the best use of available vaccine.

High Priorities

Initial vaccine has been targeted to pregnant women, children 24-59 months, high-risk children 5-18 years old, and the health care workers who serve these populations. Small quantities of vaccine were also sent to local health departments and DSHS Health Service Regions (HSRs) to serve as a safety-net. We expect allocations in the next few weeks to continue to be focused on healthcare workers, pediatric populations, and pregnant women as well as close contacts of children less than 6 years old.

As vaccine becomes available, providers who have registered to receive vaccine will receive an email notifying them that they have vaccine available to order. As additional supplies permit, vaccine will be distributed to providers serving additional risk groups. Based on current projections, we do not expect sufficient quantities of vaccine for general/public clinics until December. If projections overestimate actual supply, it could be later.

ImmTrac

All providers who are registered to receive H1N1 vaccine are encouraged to register with ImmTrac to be able to comply with Texas requirements. A provider who is already registered with ImmTrac does not need to register again.

Texas law requires that vaccines given in preparation for an emergency or disaster be reported to ImmTrac, the statewide Immunization Registry. There are several methods for reporting to ImmTrac besides manual data entry. Electronic reporting of the data through various formats is an option, as well as, reporting via paper reporting form. To report, you must be a registered user, but it is not necessary to use the system.

Providers are not required to register with ImmTrac to place an order for the novel H1N1 influenza vaccine. Orders for vaccine will not be denied if a provider is not registered with ImmTrac.

Issues with Ancillary Supply Kits

Issues with H1N1 ancillary supply kit products including needles, syringes, sharps containers, or alcohol swabs, may be sent to the following email address: H1N1AncillarySup@cdc.gov

Please include specific details on the issue at-hand including the following:

1. Specific product description
2. Manufacturer
3. Expiration date
4. Lot number
5. Details related to the specific issue

Adjuvant Mixing Needles in Ancillary Supply Kits

Please note that adjuvant needles/syringe mixing units were included in the ancillary supply kit as a precaution when the kit planning occurred. Their use is not needed. Future packaged ancillary supply kits will no longer include these mixing units, however providers may continue to receive these units in the kits until the initial inventory is depleted.

Thank you!

Texas depends on the entire statewide immunization system – including both private and public healthcare providers - to make the novel H1N1 vaccine available to all those who wish to be vaccinated. Thank you for your help!