



# MARYLAND HEALTHCARE WORKERS INFLUENZA INITIATIVE

## Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 5  
February 2009

### **\*\*Save the Date\*\* Influenza Wrap-up Meeting**

Registered and Supporting Partners of the Maryland Healthcare Worker's Initiative are invited to the Maryland Flu Season Wrap-Up, scheduled for Wednesday, April 29, 2009. It will be held at the Four Points by Sheraton at BWI located at 7032 Elm Rd., Baltimore 21240.

morning session highlights immunization of healthcare workers and features an awards ceremony recognizing facilities with high vaccination rates. The afternoon session will provide the local, state, and national perspective of the 2008-2009 influenza season.

This two-part meeting brings together immunization stakeholders from across the state to discuss successes and challenges encountered during the flu season.

Additional details about the Maryland Flu Season Wrap-Up will be released soon. In the meantime, SAVE THE DATE and keep accurate records.

### **National Influenza Vaccine Summit**

Co-sponsored by the American Medical Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Influenza Vaccine Summit has over 400 members representing more than 100 public and private organizations interested in addressing and resolving influenza and influenza vaccine issues. Participants include healthcare professionals, public health professionals, vaccine manufacturers and distributors, consumers, and other stakeholders in preventing vaccine-preventable diseases. The purpose of the Summit is to coordinate

and collaborate in influenza prevention activities.

The group convenes monthly via conference call and annually at the National Influenza Vaccine Summit conference. The Summit's website offers excellent resources for the general public and healthcare professionals such as influenza recommendations, vaccination campaign strategies, and links to influenza-related news stories. For more information about the National Influenza Vaccine Summit visit [www.preventinfluenza.org](http://www.preventinfluenza.org).

### **National Immunization Conference**

The 43rd National Immunization Conference will be held March 30—April 2, 2009 in Dallas, TX. The goals of the conference are to provide information that will help participants provide comprehensive immunization coverage for all age groups and explore innovative strategies for developing programs, policy, and research to

promote immunizations. During three and a half days of plenary sessions and workshops, various topics will be discussed, including Adult Immunization, Policy and Legislation, and Barriers to Vaccination. For more information about the 43rd National Immunization Conference go to [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/nic/](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/nic/)

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#### **Flu Season Successes & Challenges**

Do you have an influenza vaccination campaign success story? Would you like feedback on a campaign challenge? If so, we would like to hear from you and may feature your experiences in an future issues of E-News.

Email your questions, successes, or challenges to [info@immunizemaryland.org](mailto:info@immunizemaryland.org)

## Osetamivir Resistance and Antiviral Recommendations



On December 19, 2008, CDC issued interim guidance for health care professionals on the use of influenza antiviral medications this flu season. The guidance was issued in response to early data from a limited number of states indicating that a high proportion of influenza A (H1N1) viruses are resistant to the influenza antiviral medication osetamivir (Tamiflu®). This development is not surprising given that the proportion of H1N1 viruses that are osetamivir-resistant has been increasing worldwide.

As of January 17, 2009 Influenza A (H1N1) viruses from 25 state have been tested for antiviral resistance to osetamivir. Of the 160 Influenza (H1N1) isolates tested, 157 (98.1%) have been osetamivir-resistant. CDC continues to monitor this situation very closely.

According to CDC “the interim guidance provides advice for clinicians on how to treat patients with influenza antiviral medications this season. Clinicians can use influenza test results and information, if available, about which viruses are circulating, to help decide which antiviral(s) should be used. If H1N1 viruses are circulating in the community, or it’s not clear which viruses are circulating, health care providers are recommended to use an alternative antiviral, zanamivir (Relenza®), or to use combination therapy of osetamivir and rimantadine. Use of zanamivir or dual therapy

with osetamivir and rimantadine would provide effective treatment against all circulating influenza viruses. In some instances, osetamivir alone can still be used, such as when influenza B is diagnosed, or H1N1 viruses are not circulating.”

The full text of guidance can be accessed at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/antivirals/index.htm>

A podcast on Influenza Antiviral Resistance and Interim Guidance is available at <http://www2a.cdc.gov/podcasts/player.asp?f=10652>

Current influenza surveillance data from CDC it is accessible at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivity.htm>

Maryland specific data can be accessed at [http://edcp.org/influenza/Influenza\\_serv.html](http://edcp.org/influenza/Influenza_serv.html)

Clinicians are advised by CDC to “remain alert for additional changes in recommendations that might occur as the 2008 -09 influenza season progresses. Osetamivir resistant influenza A (H1N1) viruses are antigenically similar to the influenza A(H1N1) viruses represented in the vaccine, and vaccination should continue to be considered the primary prevention strategy regardless of osetamivir sensitivity.”

### Initiative Sponsors

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## Tracking Influenza Activity in Maryland

For Week 1 (Jan 11 - Jan 17, 2009), a total of 28 visits for ILI were reported by 4 providers. The median percent of ILI visits in Maryland was 0.8%. This is below the state baseline of 3.6%.

By the end of week 1 (Jan 11 - Jan 17, 2009), a total of 468 participants had signed up for the Maryland Resident Influenza Tracking Survey. Of the 468 residents who received the weekly survey, 248 (53%) responded to it. Among the respondents, 6 (2.4%) reported flu-like symptoms.

Because there is no baseline to compare these results, and the sample size is small (compared to the population), caution must be taken when interpreting the result.

DHMH continues to recruit participants for the Maryland Resident Influenza Tracking Survey and the Influenza Sentinel Providers. If you are interested in helping track flu activity in Maryland, please email [flu@dhmh.state.md.us](mailto:flu@dhmh.state.md.us)