

Media Release

For Immediate Release: Dec 4, 2009



WHAT IS HAPPENING WITH SEASONAL INFLUENZA?

At the beginning of September, the message to residents of Leeds, Grenville and Lanark was that this was going to be a "Different Influenza Season", and it certainly has been.

The second wave of the pandemic H1N1 influenza outbreak began in Ontario in September. The first laboratory case in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark was identified the week of October 12, 2009. From that point forward, H1N1 became a focus for the entire health care system. The majority of Health Unit programs were postponed. Almost all staff were involved in H1N1 activities: immunization clinics, preparing information for the public, answering phone lines and managing and following up on the cases identified in this area.

Seasonal influenza immunization was delayed, except for those 65 years of age and over and those living in Long Term Care Homes. This population has been identified as most vulnerable to the seasonal influenza viruses. The Health Unit ran seasonal influenza immunization clinics for adults 65 and over in 11 communities in October. Long Term Care Homes received vaccine for their residents as well.

Now that the number of cases of H1N1 is rapidly decreasing in the community, it is time to begin to protect the general population against seasonal influenza. **Seasonal influenza vaccine is now available for all residents in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark at primary health care providers' offices.**

The Leeds Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit will be providing community clinics for seasonal influenza immunization in January. **Watch our website and newspaper ads for locations, dates and times.**

Along with vaccination, you can also prevent the spread of influenza by cleaning your hands, covering your cough or sneeze, disinfecting hard surfaces and staying home when ill.

-30-

Contact: Dr. Anne Carter, Medical Officer of Health, 613-345-5685