

Health Unit Media Release

For immediate release: Oct 29, 2009



H1N1 Vaccine Update

This influenza season has been particularly challenging.

Initially, the Health Unit intended to work with local physicians to deliver the vaccine to the first priority groups. Doctors are more familiar with their own patients' conditions and can organize smaller clinics so that patients do not have to wait long. With the arrival of fewer doses of vaccine than anticipated, the Health Unit needed to launch an alternate plan. Doctor's offices will receive H1N1 vaccine as soon as there is enough vaccine to send it to them in an equitable manner. Meanwhile, there are very limited supplies that are in a form that cannot be broken up into numbers that would be reasonable for a private practitioner. Public clinics are the only way to deliver the vaccine to residents at this time.

Staff have been investigating locations throughout the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark area that would be suitable to hold the number of people expected to receive the vaccine and the computer program to register people who attend. Here are the confirmed clinics at this time:

H1N1 clinics for priority groups will be October 29 to November 5th, 2009.

ALMONTE	Civitan Club 500 Almonte St.	Monday, November 2	11:00am – 7:30pm
BROCKVILLE	Memorial Centre Behind Canadian Tire	Thursday, October 29 Friday, October 30	11:00am – 7:30pm 11:00am – 7:30pm
CARLETON PLACE	Arena 75 Neelin St.	Wednesday, November 4	1:00pm – 7:00pm
GANANOQUE	Kinsmen Club 400 Stone St. N	Thursday, November 5	1:00pm – 7:00pm
KEMPTVILLE	Municipal Building 285 Hwy 44	Monday, November 2	11:00am – 7:30pm
LANARK VILLAGE	Civitan Club 2144 South St.	Friday, November 6th	1:00pm – 7:00pm
PERTH	Civitan Club Hwy 43 (towards Smiths Falls)	Tuesday, November 3	1:00pm – 7:00pm
PRESCOTT	St. Mark's Parish Centre 461 Edward St.	Tuesday, November 3	1:00pm – 7:00pm
SMITHS FALLS	Smiths Falls Collegiate 299 Percy St.	Thursday, October 29 Friday, October 30	3:00pm – 9:00pm 3:00pm – 9:00pm

This first round of vaccine is to be given to priority groups as directed by the Public Health Agency of Canada. Identified priority groups will receive vaccine first because they are most at risk to develop complications and be hospitalized or die. There will be enough vaccine for everyone but this vaccine rollout strategy was directed to ensure delivery of the vaccine to the priority groups first.

The Priority Groups Are:

- Health care workers
- Individuals under 65 years of age with selected chronic medical conditions if significant enough to require regular medical follow up or hospital care, including:
 - Blood disorders
 - Liver disease
 - Heart disease
 - Asthma and chronic lung disease
 - A weakened immune system (i.e., people taking cancer drugs or people with HIV/AIDS)
 - Neurological disorders such as cystic fibrosis and cerebral palsy
 - Severe obesity
 - Diabetes
 - Kidney disease
- Pregnant women over 20 weeks **and** all pregnant women with chronic medical conditions
- New mothers within 4 weeks after delivery
- Children 6 months of age to under five years of age
- Household contacts and care providers of:
 - infants less than 6 months of age
 - persons who are immunocompromised

These priority groups will continue to be immunized until November 5th followed by everyone else the following week depending on the arrival of vaccine shipments.

The Health Unit has had to reduce and/or postpone regular programs and services, such as Baby Talk and prenatal classes, to focus on H1N1. Please call ahead for confirmation on regular services, or check the website before attending a health unit function. Outer offices in Gananoque and Kemptonville may be closed during the H1N1 vaccination clinics so staff can work at the clinics. Please call before coming to these offices.

For those interested in the influenza trends, Health Unit staff have compiled an update document that shows the level of activity of H1N1 in the area and the number of cases currently confirmed. A summary is sent to local physicians and a full report is posted on the website for those who want a more in-depth look at H1N1 surveillance.

Information on H1N1, the vaccine and its benefits can be found on the Health Unit's website as well as many resources for identifying influenza, when to stay home, caring for yourself or a family member with influenza and when to seek medical attention. Up-to-date information for pregnant women is also available. Factsheets and resources for health care professionals, schools, daycares, workplaces and municipalities can be found on the site as well.

The Health Unit is currently experiencing a vast increase in the number of calls it receives. We have several staff dedicated to answering your H1N1 and influenza questions. If you contact us, we will get to all questions as soon as possible. Try to visit the website at www.healthunit.org first if you have internet access and call 1-800-660-5853 or 613-345-5685 if you do not have access to the internet or have questions that are more specific to your individual needs.

H1N1 is present in all Ontario communities. All southern Ontario areas are experiencing higher numbers of cases.

The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit reminds everyone of the ways to prevent the spread of influenza:



- **CLEAN YOUR HANDS:** Wash your hands for at least 15 seconds with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- **COVER YOUR COUGH OR SNEEZE:** Cover your cough or sneeze with your sleeve if no tissue is available
- Throw away tissues after sneezing, coughing or wiping your nose or your child's nose.
- **DISINFECT SURFACES and ITEMS:** Regularly disinfect hard surfaces such as counters and door knobs.
- Do not share personal items or drinks.
- Individuals with influenza-like illness should not share personal items with others.
- **STAY HOME IF YOU ARE ILL:** Avoid large crowds of people where viruses can spread easily. Stay home when you are sick.
- **GET IMMUNIZED:** Get the seasonal influenza vaccine early if you are 65 years of age or older or live in a long term care home.
- Get the H1N1 influenza vaccine at one of the 9 locations in the Tri-County.
- For more information on H1N1, visit "Tips to Stay Healthy" at www.ontario.ca/flu.

For further information about Pandemic (H1N1) 2009, please contact:

- The Health Unit website: www.healthunit.org
- The Public Health Agency of Canada: www.fightflu.ca
- The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care: www.health.gov.on.ca/en/flu
- The World Health Organization: www.who.int/en
- Or call the Health ACTION Line at 1-800-660-5853 or 613-345-5685

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Contact:

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