Media Release

January 6, 2010

Health Unit to start giving seasonal flu vaccine at clinics next week

Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit is offering both seasonal influenza and H1N1 vaccine to everyone over six months of age at public immunization clinics starting January 11th. In October 2009, seasonal influenza vaccine had only been offered to seniors over 65 years of age and residents of Long Term Care Homes.

All Ontarians are encouraged to get BOTH the pandemic H1N1 AND seasonal flu shots to protect themselves from illness and prevent spread of influenza in the community. BOTH vaccines will be available at the Health Unit's community clinics. **Ten clinics are being held in ten different communities across Leeds, Grenville and Lanark from Jan 11th to the 26th**. These clinics will again be using a computer system to register those being immunized so people can bring their Driver's Licence and Health Card to be quickly swiped for information. However, those without these items will also be immunized. Residents will receive a computer printout for proof of immunization.

Consider the following points in understanding why it's important to get the seasonal flu shot:

- Seasonal influenza viruses are present in the environment and are most prevalent during the fall and winter months. The viruses have the capability to change slightly from year to year so we need to be vaccinated every year. The H1N1 vaccine does not protect you from seasonal flu.
- This has been a different flu season. The pandemic (H1N1) 2009 flu virus has been the dominant circulating virus thus far. Since mid-November however, influenza activity related to the pandemic H1N1 virus in Ontario has gradually declined. Although there is no seasonal flu activity in Ontario at this time, it is possible that it may reappear this flu season.
- While the pandemic H1N1 flu outbreak remains a concern, it is important to remember that seasonal influenza remains a serious, contagious and potentially deadly disease. Everyone is at risk of contracting seasonal influenza. Some individuals however, are at higher risk of complications and hospitalization. Those at high risk of seasonal flu include the elderly, the very young, and those with underlying health conditions that affect their immune systems.

Flu season continues until Spring. Let's protect ourselves and those close to us by getting our flu shot.

For more information about Seasonal Flu or H1N1, visit our website at www.healthunit.org or call our Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853 or 613-345-5685.

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Contact: Susan Healey, Communications Coordinator, 613-345-5685 or 613-802-0550

**********SEASONAL FLU CLINIC SCHEDULE**********

Jan. 11 Brockville Memorial Centre 1 Magedoma Dr., 12:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Jan. 13 Lanark & District Civitan Club 2144 Pine Grove Rd, 3:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Jan. 14 Carleton Place Arena 75 Neelin St., 1:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 15 St. Mark's Parish Centre 461 Edward St., Prescott, . 3:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 18 Gananoque Health Unit 375 William St. S., Suite 200, 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Jan. 19 Bethel Pentecostal Church Hall 301 Hwy 29, Smiths Falls, (south of Mall) 1:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Jan. 20 University of Guelph, Kemptville W. B. George Centre, Prescott St. 2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Jan. 21 Almonte Civitan Club 500 Almonte St., 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Jan. 25 Perth Civitan Club R.R. # 5, County Rd 43, 2:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Jan. 26 Elgin Lions Club 10 Pineview Dr., 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.