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2011-2012 Influenza Immunization Program Goals

The purpose of Alberta's Seasonal Influenza Immunization Program is to reduce the incidence of influenza in Alberta and the impact of this illness on Albertans. While the overall goal is to immunize as many Albertans as possible, Alberta Health Services (AHS) is looking to target and increase immunization rates in specific high risk groups including infants 6 to 23 months of age, individuals 65 years of age and older, individuals with chronic health conditions and long term care residents. In addition, improving immunization rates in health care workers, including staff of long term care facilities, will remain a focus. Community providers play an important role in identifying and providing influenza immunization to individuals from the high risk groups, contributing significantly to increased immunization rates within these groups.

Roles and Responsibilities

Alberta Health and Wellness is responsible for establishing Alberta's Influenza Immunization Program Policy. This policy sets out the influenza immunization program requirements that AHS and community / health care providers must comply with in order to administer provincially funded influenza vaccine. It includes the requirements pertaining to client eligibility, adverse event monitoring, vaccine supply including storage, handling and distribution, record keeping and reporting. Details of community / health care provider responsibilities will be outlined in the 2011-2012 Seasonal Influenza Vaccine Agreement for Community Providers that will be posted by the end of July at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/2824.asp>.

Vaccine and Supply Chain Update

- Vaccine manufacturers have indicated to AHW that there are no issues identified in the manufacturing process to date.
- AHS has been advised that 50% of Alberta's influenza vaccine supply is anticipated to arrive by the end of September or the beginning of October 2011, for distribution to community providers by mid October.
- All providers should anticipate receiving one or both influenza vaccine products (Fluviral® and Agriflu™) in lots as received by AHS.
- Since Agriflu™ comes in pre-filled syringes (no needles), it is important for you to assess your refrigeration capacity. Your vaccine storage capacity will affect the amount of vaccine you can accommodate. More frequent ordering and shipments may be required.
- Agriflu™ 10 dose (unit) box size:

Length	Width	Height
10.75 cm / 4 in	10.25 cm / 4 in	4.4 cm / 1.75 in

Planning Update

The following summarizes program activities to date.

- In an effort to raise public awareness, Communications will be enhancing media/social marketing.
- A postcard recommending influenza immunization will be mailed to parents of infants 6 to 23 months of age in September.
- Infants 6 to 23 months of age will receive influenza immunization through Public Health during their routine childhood immunization appointment beginning in October.

Website Links

Provincial, national and international influenza activity information can be found at the following links:

- Alberta - <http://www.health.alberta.ca/health-info/influenza-evidence.html>
- Canada - FLUWATCH - www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fluwatch/index-eng.php
- USA-CDC - www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/
- World Health Organization - www.who.int/topics/influenza/en/