



October 31, 2009

Statement from Alberta public health officials

H1N1 clinics suspended due to vaccine supply issues

After consulting top senior public health officials from across Alberta, and with a reduced supply of H1N1 vaccines expected to arrive in the province starting next week from the manufacturer, we have ordered the suspension of all immunization clinics in Alberta effective immediately. The suspension will remain in effect until further notice.

Targeted H1N1 vaccination efforts will resume early next week focusing only on those at greatest risk. This includes pregnant woman; children six months to less than five years of age; people under 65 with chronic health conditions; people living in remote and isolated communities; and health care workers.

The demand for the H1N1 vaccine during the first week of the immunization campaign was tremendous. To date we have vaccinated more than 300,000 Albertans. However, we cannot continue to address that level of demand with the expected reduction in the vaccine shipment next week. It is imperative that we focus on the most vulnerable with the vaccine we currently have on hand and with the smaller than expected amount arriving.

We have always said that we will adapt and change our pandemic plan as needed. Alberta Health Services is currently working to reconfigure the vaccination program to a more targeted approach. Details on that plan will be released on Monday.

Every province in the country is facing similar vaccine supply shortages; Alberta is no different. When full weekly shipments of the H1N1 vaccine resume, we will have the capacity to fulfill our commitment that any Albertan who needs or wants the H1N1 vaccine will receive it.

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Alberta Health and Wellness

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For more information on Alberta's plans for pandemic H1N1 influenza, please visit www.health.alberta.ca, or www.albertahealthservices.ca.

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Editor's note: We also ask that radio stations, television stations and other media assist us in giving this statement broad and extensive air time as soon and often as possible to help the public stay informed as the vaccine supply issue is changing day to day.

No further comment will be available at this time. Further announcements will follow.

Media inquiries may be directed to:

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