



November 20, 2009

H1N1 vaccine available to all Albertans over six months of age starting Nov. 23

Edmonton... Given a positive resolution to the national vaccine shortage, and good uptake of vaccine among the highest-risk groups previously announced, Alberta's H1N1 immunization program will expand to include all members of the public starting Monday, Nov. 23.

As of Nov.20, Alberta has approximately 500,000 doses of vaccine on hand, and will be receiving regular shipments through December to immunize up to 50,000 people per day. All Albertans who want to be immunized will have that opportunity over the next couple of months. Over 650,000 Albertans have been immunized so far.

Over the last week, Alberta Health Services has observed reduced community spread of the virus, seen reduced pressure on its emergency departments and intensive care units, and had markedly reduced demand at its Influenza Assessment Centres. With this decline of the second wave of H1N1, officials are encouraging Albertans to be immunized before the end of the year.

Lineups at immunization clinics have been short over the last couple of weeks. In anticipation of increased demand next week, Alberta Health Services has put strategies in place to manage lines if required, including wristbands handed to those in line indicating the time they can return for immediate service. There will be no need for people to lineup before clinics open in the morning.

Mass immunization clinics are scheduled until late December. Alberta Health Services will be working over the coming weeks to make vaccine available through other providers, including family physicians, pharmacies, and post secondary and employer clinics.

For the most current information on the H1N1 immunization program, including clinic dates and locations go to: www.albertahealthservices.ca. For the convenience of the public, several clinic locations are provided in larger urban centres. Clinic dates may vary in smaller communities, so check the website before you go.

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