



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

Dave A. Chokshi, MD, MSc

*Commissioner*

September 15, 2020

Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc  
Assistant Commissioner  
Bureau of Immunization

42-09 28<sup>th</sup> Street, CN21  
Queens, NY 11101-4132

Dear Colleague:

This is an update on influenza activity and the availability and distribution of seasonal flu vaccine. Influenza activity is currently low in the U.S. Vaccine manufacturers have projected they would provide as many as 194-198 million doses of flu vaccine nationally for use during the 2020-21 season, which is more than the 175 million dose record set during the 2019-2020 influenza season. Flu vaccination should be well underway at your facility.

In New York City (NYC), we have received about 24% of our total Vaccines for Children (VFC) flu vaccine allocation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and 74% of those doses have been shipped to providers. We expect to receive 50% of our flu vaccine allocation by the end of September, and the balance by the end of October to mid-November. Facilities will receive partial shipments of flu vaccine until their orders have been completely shipped. We will have enough flu vaccine for the VFC population and do not anticipate any supply problems. Most of the doses sent out thus far have been inactivated influenza vaccine and much of the remaining available vaccine is FluMist (live-attenuated influenza vaccine quadrivalent [LAIV] [AstraZeneca]). FluMist can be used for children 2 through 18 years of age (as well as adults up to the age of 49), and is one of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommended vaccines. Please do not allow your facility to run out of vaccine; if you need vaccine, contact us before your inventory gets too low.

As of September 14, 2020, only 74% of VFC providers have ordered flu vaccine. **All VFC providers are expected to offer flu vaccine to their patients.** This is especially important for this coming influenza season since the novel coronavirus causing COVID-19 is expected to cocirculate with influenza viruses. VFC providers who have not yet ordered flu vaccine should do so **immediately**. For questions about your flu vaccine order, please call (347) 396-2489.

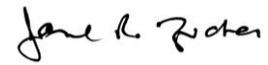
Flu vaccine is still available for purchase for providers and medical facilities who need vaccine for their non-VFC eligible and/or adult populations. More information about what products are available can be found at <https://www.izsubmitpartners.org/ivats/>.

Flu vaccine coverage for children and adults in NYC remains low, and below the Healthy People 2030 goal of 70% for persons aged 6 months and over. Use evidence-based strategies to improve your facility's flu vaccination rates, including standing orders and reminder/recall. See [Back to Basics: Five Steps to Better Influenza Rates](#) for additional strategies to increase coverage in your facility. The Citywide Immunization Registry (CIR) can help you with these quality improvement activities.

Be sure to report all flu vaccine codes appropriately to the CIR, as detailed in our August 19, 2020 letter, at <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/cir/flu-vaccine-codes-20-21.pdf>.

For questions on any immunization issue, including ordering VFC vaccine, please call (347) 396-2400 or email [nycimmunize@health.nyc.gov](mailto:nycimmunize@health.nyc.gov). We thank you for your continuing efforts at protecting NYC residents from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane R. Zucker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc