



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE
Thomas Farley, MD, MPH
Commissioner

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

September 16, 2011

Dear Colleague:

This is an update on the availability and distribution of seasonal influenza vaccine through the Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program. To date, we have been allocated approximately 64% of our total influenza vaccine order by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Over 289,320 doses have been shipped so far. We are shipping partial orders to ensure that all VFC providers receive some vaccine. We also recently received a portion of our FluMist® allocation and have started processing these orders. In addition, decision support for the new influenza recommendations has been deployed in the CIR's Online Registry to help you to appropriately vaccinate your patients.

It is not too early to begin vaccinating. Vaccination given in September will offer patients protection throughout the entire influenza season. Please begin to vaccinate your patients as soon as you receive vaccine. We expect to have a sufficient supply of seasonal flu vaccine this year to immunize all of your patients. Please note that several brands of flu vaccine in pre-filled syringes contain latex in the syringe tip cap and should be avoided in patients with a history of severe, anaphylactic allergy to latex. For information on specific vaccine products, please refer to <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/downloads/appendices/B/latex-table.pdf>.

Only about 65% of pediatric practices participating in the VFC program have ordered influenza vaccine thus far. **If you have not yet placed your VFC influenza order, we urge you to do so.** We also remind you that VFC influenza orders will **only** be accepted electronically using the Online Registry at www.nyc.gov/health/cir. Please submit an order for **all** of the influenza vaccine you will need for the entire 2011–2012 season. You will also be able to track your influenza vaccine shipments, edit your influenza vaccine order and verify your balance in the Online Registry. You can e-mail nycimmunize@health.nyc.gov or call the VFC program at 347-396-2405 at any time for information about your influenza order, or if you need help submitting your order.

For adults and non-VFC eligible patients, providers should contact influenza vaccine manufacturers or distributors to obtain vaccine. For more information, please visit <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/imm/flu-imm-order-info.pdf>.

We encourage you to make every effort to vaccinate your patients this year. For further information about influenza, please visit www.nyc.gov/flu. Thank you for helping protect New York City residents from influenza.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane R. Zucker".

Jane R. Zucker, M.D., M.Sc.