



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE**
Mary T. Bassett, MD, MPH
Commissioner

December 11, 2017

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

42-09 28th Street, CN21
Queens, NY 11101-4132

Dear Colleague:

This is an update on the availability and distribution of seasonal influenza vaccine, as well as a report on influenza activity. Nationally, influenza activity is increasing. Circulating influenza strains are similar to those contained in the vaccine, but it is too early to tell if this will continue throughout the influenza season. In New York City (NYC), influenza activity is low, but increasing, and there have already been several reported influenza outbreaks at long-term care facilities. Clinical laboratories in NYC continue to report specimens positive for influenza type A and type B.

In NYC, we have received 100% of our total influenza vaccine allocation for the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program. Influenza vaccine orders continue to be filled at this time, though facilities may be receiving partial shipments until their order has been completely shipped. All products are in good supply. For any help you might need with your VFC influenza order, please call (347) 396-2489. Additional VFC vaccine is available, if needed.

For non-VFC eligible children and adults, providers can still obtain influenza vaccine by contacting vaccine manufacturers or distributors. For a list of vaccine manufacturers and distributors, visit <http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/imm/flu-vac-ordering>. You will need to confirm product availability directly with vaccine manufacturers and distributors.

As of November 29, 2017, influenza vaccination coverage of children in all three age groups—6-59 month-olds, 5-8 year-olds, and 9-18 year-olds—is slightly ahead of what it was last year at this time. Although coverage had fallen last year, this is still a good sign. It is not too late to bring your patients into vaccinate. Consider setting up influenza vaccine-only clinics.

We would like to make you aware of a link to Frequently Asked Questions about the flu that was posted by the Immunization Action Coalition:
<http://www.immunize.org/express/issue1336.asp>.

For questions about the influenza vaccine, other than those pertaining to your VFC order, please contact (347) 396-2400 or email nycimmunize@health.nyc.gov. Thank you for your continued efforts in protecting NYC residents from influenza.

Sincerely,

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

Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc