



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE**

Thomas Farley, MD, MPH

Commissioner

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

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November 26, 2013

Dear Colleague:

This is an update on the availability and distribution of seasonal influenza vaccine and on early pediatric influenza coverage estimates for New York City (NYC).

Influenza vaccine continues to be in good supply. The Bureau of Immunization has distributed nearly 600,000 doses of influenza vaccine to pediatric providers through the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program since August 2013, and continues to fill orders on an ongoing basis. However, as of November 18, 2013, only about 35% of children aged 6 through 59 months and 27% of children aged 5 through 8 years have been vaccinated. Though influenza activity in NYC is currently low, it is expected to increase in the coming months. Please make every effort to immunize all of your patients as soon as possible. Providers should utilize the reminder/recall features in the Citywide Immunization Registry to identify patients still in need of vaccination.

There is still influenza vaccine available for purchase for your non-VFC eligible children or adult patients if you have used all of your vaccine but have not vaccinated all your patients. Providers interested in obtaining additional vaccine can visit the Influenza Vaccination Availability Tracking System website at http://www.preventinfluenza.org/ivats/ivats_healthcare.asp.

We would also like to alert you to the MedImmune FluMist® Replacement Program, which allows for the replacement, at no cost, of unused, expiring FluMist® doses for the 2013-2014 season. For replacement of VFC FluMist® doses, please see <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/downloads/med-fm-rf-instruct.pdf>. For information on replacement of privately purchased FluMist®, please contact your distributor directly.

The 2013-14 influenza recommendations are available in the City Health Information publication, entitled Influenza Prevention and Control, at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/chi/chi-32-3.pdf>. Health Bulletins on influenza vaccination are available for order from the Health Department by calling 311. The English version is available at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/public/dohmhnews12-03.pdf>.

We encourage you to make every effort to vaccinate *all* your eligible 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