

Influenza Vaccine Bulletin **#7**

August 31, 2001

The National Immunization Program (NIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is publishing and distributing periodic bulletins to update partners about recent developments related to the production, distribution and administration of influenza vaccine for the 2001-2002 influenza season. All recipients of this bulletin are encouraged to distribute each issue widely to colleagues, members and constituents.

Influenza Vaccine Supply and Production

Vaccine manufacturers continue to project that 79.1 million doses of influenza vaccine will be distributed this season. Some delays in distribution are still anticipated.

- Projected distribution of influenza vaccine for 2001, based on aggregate manufacturers' estimates, is 79.1 million doses. Approximately 60 percent of the total supply should be distributed by the end of October. About 30 percent of the total influenza vaccine supply will be delivered in November and the final 10 percent is expected in early December. Officials at FDA and CDC stress that these projections from manufacturers could change as the season progresses.

Influenza Vaccine Distribution and Administration

CDC is continuing to work with partners to promote the administration of influenza vaccine that is available early to persons at greatest risk of complications from influenza.

- A partners meeting, co-sponsored by CDC and the AMA, was held on August 22 in Chicago to discuss preparations being made to comply with the Advisory Committee on Immunizations Practices (ACIP) recommendations. Approximately 60 people, representing manufacturers, distributors, physicians, vaccination contractors, pharmacists, hospitals, federal agencies, and state and local governments, attended the meeting. A communications task force will be formed to further enhance communication efforts. As much as possible, participants agreed to adhere to ACIP influenza recommendations.

Information on influenza vaccine lots released by FDA is available on the FDA website.

- Information on influenza vaccine lots that are released by FDA and available for distribution by manufacturers can be found at www.fda.gov/cber/flu/flu. The information will be updated periodically as additional vaccine is received from manufacturers and released by FDA.

Those providing services in work sites should self-identify to their vaccine suppliers and request that their shipments be deferred until November 1 or later.

- Should work site providers receive their vaccine early in the season, they should consider the following options: 1) share vaccine with other providers in the community serving high-risk patients and arrange for those providers to repay vaccine when theirs is delivered. Work site clinics should be scheduled for Nov. 1 or later. 2) hold clinics for high-risk employees only, then share the remaining vaccine as in option 1, and schedule additional clinics for low-risk workers when vaccine is repaid (but no sooner than Nov. 1).

CDC is asking providers to reassess their vaccine needs and to alert their vaccine suppliers as soon as possible to make adjustments if their orders overestimate their current needs.

- Influenza vaccine manufacturers have reported that even though current projections of the total vaccine supply expected this year exceed that of prior years, all anticipated influenza vaccine has been obligated much earlier than has previously been the case. (Some vaccine may still be available from distributors.) Because so many orders were placed much earlier this year, CDC is asking for this reassessment to facilitate a broader distribution of early season vaccine to providers with high-risk patients. (See letter distributed with this bulletin.)

Influenza Vaccine Communication

CDC is continuing communication activities to increase awareness and adoption of the ACIP recommendations for addressing this season's influenza vaccine delays.

- Based on a communications needs survey of state and local health departments, CDC has created four flyers and two posters to inform people at high-risk of complications about the benefits of influenza vaccine, to encourage healthy people to wait until November to receive influenza vaccine, and to promote the use of influenza vaccine in November and December. Most materials will be accompanied by the tagline "Fight the Flu". The print flyers will be made available in PDF format on the CDC influenza website (www.cdc.gov/nip/flu) on September 5 for organizations that wish to do mass printing.
- State health department contingency plans are being added to the CDC influenza website (www.cdc.gov/nip/flu) as they are received by CDC.