



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Health

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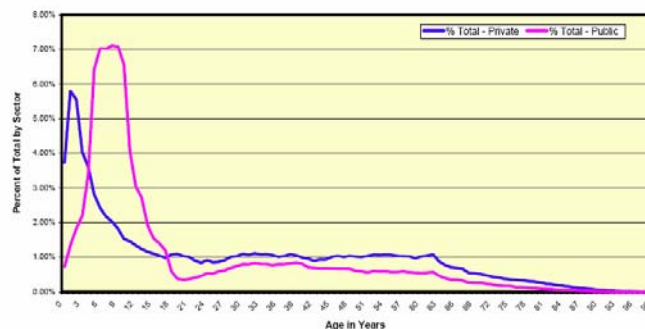
TTY 7-1-1 OR
1-800-828-1120

December 11, 2009

Dear Colleague:

As we head into the holidays and our typical flu season, I want to share with you the latest information on H1N1 influenza. In a press conference yesterday, I proudly announced that Virginia deserves an A+ at this midpoint in our H1N1 **Vaccination** effort – largely due to the willingness of you in the medical community to participate, giving Virginians multiple avenues to access vaccine and protect themselves. I recently returned from meeting with my fellow state health officers and must share that I am firmly convinced that our ongoing partnership – the private medical community working with public health – has been the key to our current success.

Percent of H1N1 Vaccine Doses Administered in the Public and Private Sectors by Age, Cumulative, Reported as of 12/8/2009



VDH
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

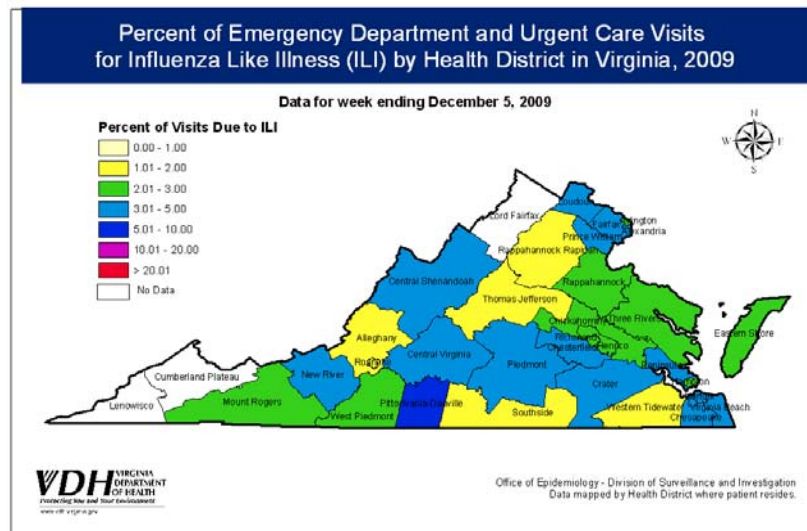
Over 2 million doses of H1N1 vaccine have been delivered to Virginia (or are currently in transit) over the past two months. Reporting data confirms that, as of three weeks ago, 22% of Virginians 18 years and younger along with 5% of those 19 and over had documented H1N1 vaccinations. Given the time lag in recording immunizations and the ongoing flow of vaccine into the state, these numbers will continue to climb. Both the private and public sector have worked hard to provide those persons in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) priority groups vaccine. While we continue to reach out to those in priority groups, VDH is also beginning first steps toward universal vaccination. These steps include:

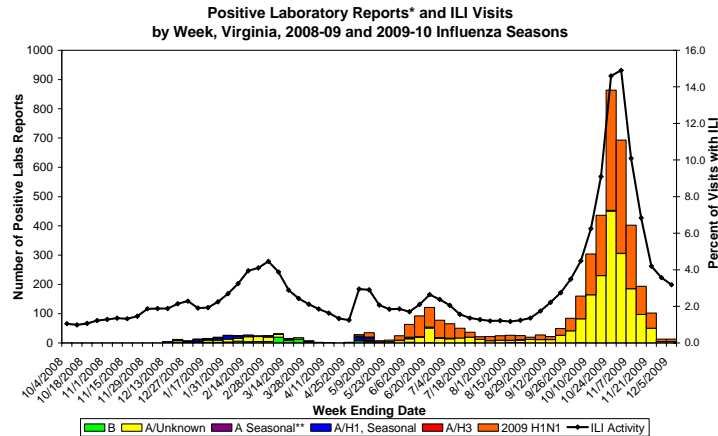
- Encouraging the medical community to widen your scope of H1N1 vaccination services to all Virginians. I encourage you to especially reach out to young adults ages 19 to 24. They typically have limited contact with the healthcare system, but are at high risk for H1N1 infection. For example, if you are an H1N1 vaccinator, invite those family members accompanying your patients to their visits to receive an H1N1 vaccination.
- VDH, in collaboration with VHHA, is encouraging the use of H1N1 vaccination standing orders for patients upon discharge from all hospitals.
- VDH will be distributing LAIV (“nasal mist”) H1N1 vaccine to participating Virginia pharmacies and retail stores beginning next week. Other formulations should follow soon thereafter.

It is not too late for pharmacies to register (or complete their registration process) to be H1N1 vaccination sites. Please contact our Division of Immunization if you would like to participate at 804 864-8055 for assistance.

Date: 12/09/09	Preservative-free vaccine	Preservative-containing vaccine	Intranasal vaccine (LAIV)	<i>Total</i>
Public providers	38,100	689,910	301,490	1,029,500
Private providers	162,100	613,950	169,970	946,020
Other providers	1,650	72,170	5,290	79,110
Total	201,850	1,376,030	476,750	2,054,630

Currently our **Surveillance** efforts continue to confirm decreasing disease from the peak several weeks ago. However, influenza activity is still widespread, which is quite unusual for this time of year and we do not know what the totality of this flu season will look like. Essentially all identifiable flu strains continue to be H1N1. Although the state laboratory (Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services, “DCLS”) confirmed two influenza B and one H3 strain in October, none were found in November.





*Positive laboratory reports are presented by week of specimen collection. Data are added as new test results become available; therefore, information for the most recent week will always be incomplete.
** 'A Seasonal' indicates a positive Influenza A finding that is negative for Novel H1N1 with no further subtyping.

Direct Clinical Care continues to focus on appropriate use of antiviral medications, including the new intravenous antiviral Peramivir. The CDC has posted *new interim guidance on the use of antiviral medications* at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/recommendations.htm>. Please take the time to read these if you provide direct clinical care: they include information on the use of Peramivir, antiviral dosage for children, treatment of those ill for over 48 hours and other important guidance.

VDH's **Communication** with the public and medical community continues to confirm the importance of all your hard work to combat this new flu strain. Media interest remains high along with public concern. Please remember that the VDH Inquiry Center is available to provide you and the public with accurate information about H1N1 influenza weekdays from 8:30am to 4:30pm. The toll-free number is 1-877-ASK-VDH3. Our website at www.vdh.virginia.gov and that of the CDC at www.cdc.gov are also excellent resources to share with patients. H1N1 flu vaccination opportunities can be accessed on the VDH website, using the Flu Vaccine Locator button on the opening page.

We still have significant challenges in our fight against H1N1 influenza. We continue our efforts on making sure each Virginian understands the importance of vaccination with a particular focus on vulnerable and hard to reach populations. I encourage you to continue to work with your local health departments and others to collaborate and share information and resources. Again, thank you for your dedication and skill.

Sincerely,

Karen Remley, MD, MBA, FAAP
State Health Commissioner