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**Oregon weekly H1N1 influenza update
Tuesday, October 27, 2009**

The H1N1 vaccine continues to trickle into the state. So far, Oregon has received about 6 percent of the vaccine necessary for the people in priority groups, which accounts for about half of Oregon's population.

"We know that there isn't enough H1N1 vaccine for everyone right now," says Dr. Mel Kohn, director of Oregon Public Health Division. "We want those at the highest risk to go to the front of the line."

Five private manufacturers are delivering the vaccine around the country as soon as it is produced. In Oregon, counties and tribes request the supply and decide how to distribute it to individual health care providers and clinics. The amount of vaccine is allocated to counties on a per-capita basis.

"Even if you don't get vaccinated right away, there is still value in getting one eventually," says Dr. Kohn. "It's likely that H1N1 will continue into the spring, so it's not too late to get protection."

For most people, a case H1N1 flu is no worse than seasonal flu, lasting about 7-10 days with the vast majority of people getting better without seeking medical attention.

Since Sept. 1, 2009, 482 people in 24 counties have been hospitalized in Oregon with influenza-like illness; 15 people in eight counties have died.

Oregon Public Health has activated the emergency operations center full time to coordinate the state's response to pandemic H1N1 and ensure that the most up-to-date information is available. The center is working closely with local health departments and monitoring hospital capacity and supplies.

Hospitals and health care providers in some Oregon counties have experienced a surge of patients, but so far there is enough capacity to care for people with symptoms severe enough to require hospitalization. On Oct. 26, President Obama declared a national state

of emergency in response to pandemic H1N1. This action allows hospitals to waive certain regulatory requirements so they can respond better to the emergency, such as making it easier to transfer patients between facilities.

“Until the vaccine arrives be patient, proactive and calm,” says Dr. Kohn. “Protect yourself and others by washing your hands, covering your cough and staying home when you’re sick. We’ll all get through the flu season by working together.”

For more information, visit www.flu.oregon.gov or call the Oregon Public Health Flu Hotline at 1-800-978-3040.

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