



NATIONAL INFLUENZA VACCINE SUMMIT NEWSLETTER

Influenza Activity Spotlights

February 15 & 21, 2008

Issue #15

Professional Medical Organizations

Please disseminate widely to all of your members.

(This update is to provide the latest information on influenza to partners of the Summit. Endorsement of any material present herein by either the CDC or the AMA, co-sponsors of the Summit, should not be inferred.)

1. On January 31, CDC notified healthcare providers and others of a recent increase in [influenza surveillance reports](#). Continued use of influenza vaccine, appropriate use of antiviral medications, and respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette measures continue to be emphasized to reduce the substantial burden of influenza.
2. CDC has reported 10 child deaths from influenza during the current 2007-08 influenza season as of early February. Important [talking points](#) to describe this tragedy and the issues around it have been issued.
3. The FDA's Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) has [recommended](#) that the strains for the influenza vaccine for the 2008-2009 season follow those recommended by the [WHO](#). This raises challenges for manufacturers who now have to start the production of a vaccine with three new strains. Some reassurance comes from the fact that two of the new strains, the B and H1N1 strains, are in the current southern hemisphere vaccine and so some experience with those two strains exist. However, the new H3N2 strain will be a new entity. Summit partners should be assured that the Summit Executive Committee will be working on proactively handling potential issues that may arise from this news and continue to count on partners for guidance.
4. MedImmune wishes to draw the Summit partners' attention to the call for comments on NCQA proposed HEDIS metric measuring pediatric influenza vaccination for children 2 years and under. Interested partners should comment directly to the NCQA. Attached is NCQA's [proposed measures](#) and MedImmune's [public comments](#).
5. Novartis Vaccines has issued a [press release](#) regarding ordering vaccine for the 2008-09 vaccination season.
6. There was much discussion on the February 20 CDC/Summit conference call regarding the mismatch message not being adequately balanced with the message that the vaccine still is protective and can reduce the severity of disease. The CDC has updated their [Flu Season Q&A](#) to reflect the protection that is still provided by the vaccine and will be linking to it directly from the CDC [Flu main page](#).

Partners should continue to offer vaccine and communicate to the media and the public that despite the mismatch, Department of Defense data indicate that the vaccine's H3N2 strain is 52% protective against the circulating H3N2 Brisbane strain and that the vaccine reduces severity of disease.

7. The 2008 National Influenza Vaccine Summit meeting is scheduled for May 12 and 13, 2008 in Atlanta, Georgia. More details regarding the hotel and room blocks to follow. At this time, the meeting is scheduled to begin at 1 PM on the 12th and end at 4 PM on the 13th. There will be a dinner session (buffet dinner provided) on the evening of the 12th so please enter that in your calendars as well.
8. As the ACIP is meeting next Wednesday, the weekly CDC/Summit call will be cancelled. There will be a call the following week where an update on the influenza issues from the ACIP meeting will be presented.