



National Influenza Vaccine Summit

Influenza Activity Spotlights

Friday, November 4, 2011

Issue #7

Professional Medical Organizations
Please disseminate widely to all of your members.

This update summarizes the Summit conference calls from October 27 and November 3, 2011.

- 1. National Influenza Vaccine Summit Announcement:** The 2012 Summit will be held in Atlanta on May 15–17, 2012.
- 2. Summary of National Influenza Vaccine Summit Call on *Thursday, November 3, 2011***

Influenza surveillance: Scott Epperson presented the latest in influenza surveillance information through week 42, the week ending October 22. Influenza activity levels are still low, remaining at or below baseline. A small but increasing number of specimens are testing positive, and there are steadily increasing numbers of outpatient visits due to influenza-like illness being reported. Low numbers of deaths have been reported due to influenza or pneumococcal disease, and there are no reported pediatric deaths to date. All states are reporting low or sporadic influenza activity.

The majority of the few strains that have been characterized thus far are H3N2, but smaller numbers of 2009 H1N1 and some type B are also being seen. Only 4 H3N2 specimens have been characterized for match with vaccine strains, but all four match. A new surveillance [summary](#) is posted every Friday. When asked about whether the B strains match the current vaccine strain, Scott replied that B strains have not yet been collected for typing. For those typed over the summer, the majority of the B strains were similar to the B strain contained in the vaccine. Data will improve as more samples are collected due to increasing incidence. *FluView* [reports](#) now include new interactive tools that allow customization, and users also can easily download historical data. As the season progresses, CDC will deploy additional interactive features, particularly around hospitalization and mortality data.

American Nurses Association Campaigns: Katie Brewer from the American Nurses Association (ANA) presented on two ANA initiatives. The *Bringing Immunity to Every Community* initiative emphasizes competency and action around influenza. For this initiative, the ANA combined resources from multiple sources and then tailored them to create a toolkit specific to nurses with nursing messages. The second ANA initiative discussed was *Unite to Fight the Flu*. This campaign, highlighted by a video address by the current ANA President, seeks to demonstrate that all of us have an integral part in influenza prevention. The campaign, which essentially is a spin on CDC's *The Flu Ends With U*, speaks to all nurses about combining efforts to fight influenza. The ANA President's video message serves to inspire nurses with a sense that it's more than just getting vaccinated; nurses are taking a powerful step to protect all vulnerable people from influenza by acting as role models. The video can be accessed on the ANA's immunization [website](#) or on [YouTube](#). The ANA website also contains other immunization resources for nurses. Please share these with nurses and other stakeholders.

CMS Billing: Anne Hauswald and Prabath Malluwa-Wadu from CMS provided clarification about the change request (CR) 7075 annual payment update for the season. The effective payment date for

2012 influenza vaccine prices is 9/1/2011, despite the fact that the CR was not released until the end of October. The official implementation date was stated as 1/27/2012 in the original CR, generating confusion among carriers. The CR was meant to have stated that implementation of the new prices was to occur *no later than* 1/27/2012. Some contractors felt that, based upon the first CR, they could not pay until 1/27/2012, but that is not the case. Files for the new prices went up early, and contractors were allowed to use the prices any time after 9/2/2011. CMS is aware of the issue with NGS (National Government Services) and is working with them to resolve the problem. One Summit member asked about the unexpected new \$500 fee required to submit an application for Medicare roster billing and requested that some form of outreach be provided in the future so that states are not taken by surprise. Anne responded that this would be an issue for CMS Enrollment group, and the Summit will follow up directly with this group. Finally, Anne responded to a question by stating there is no plan for this year to introduce Q codes for pre-filled syringes.

3. Summary of National Influenza Summit Call on *Thursday, October 27, 2011*

ACIP Influenza Session: No votes were taken during the ACIP influenza session on October 26; rather, talks were presented for information and discussion only. The Committee received an overview of the 2011–12 domestic surveillance and epidemiology data, and Lisa Grohskopf will update the Summit as new data is received. The ACIP also received a presentation on influenza vaccine effectiveness using 2010–11 season data, as well as an update on Fluzone High-Dose vaccine and a summary of VAERS reports. Lastly, Dr. James Singleton’s [presentation](#) from last week’s Summit call was presented to the ACIP. Presentations from all ACIP talks will be posted on the ACIP meeting [website](#).

Pregnancy Letter: The *MMWR* “Influenza Vaccination Coverage Among Pregnant Women --- United States, 2010—11 Influenza Season” states that, “Women offered influenza vaccination by a health-care provider (62%) were more likely to be vaccinated (71%) than other women (14%) and were more likely to have positive attitudes about vaccine effectiveness and safety.” Therefore, a “Pregnancy Letter” was created to urge healthcare providers of pregnant women to suggest these women get vaccinated. The letter also mentions barriers to vaccination of pregnant women. A number of major organizations, including the National Influenza Vaccine Summit, have signed the letter to validate its credibility and support the request. The letter will be available on CDC’s website within a few weeks. Although space is limited, any large organizations that would like to sign the letter should contact Dr. Erin Kennedy at EDKennedy@cdc.gov.

Flulapalooza! Mass Vaccination Clinic: Congratulations to Melanie Swift and others at Vanderbilt Occupational Health Clinic for breaking the Guinness Book record for the most people to be vaccinated in an eight-hour period. [Flulapalooza](#) was developed to test Vanderbilt’s emergency preparedness plan. The goal was to vaccinate 8,000 people in 8 hours, but they were able to vaccinate 12,850 during the peak 8 hour window; in total, 14,082 people vaccinated over 13 hours.

Updated FDA statement on jet injectors: Lorrie McNeill spoke to the Summit to clarify the recent FDA [statement](#) regarding jet injectors. The FDA recommends using a sterile needle and syringe for an intramuscular injection of inactivated influenza vaccine. This is the only approved method of delivery for inactivated influenza vaccine, other than the approved delivery method for the new intradermal vaccine that comes packaged in its own prefilled syringe. Currently only one vaccine (MMR) is approved for use in jet injectors. Although jet injector devices have been “cleared”, this means only that they have been proven to be similar and perform as well as existing devices on the market. Vaccine labeling will specify the approved delivery methods and whether a vaccine is approved for use in a jet injector device. FDA and CDC feel that those who have already been vaccinated using a jet injector do not need to be revaccinated.

4. The CDC/Influenza Division Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report ending week 42, 2011 (10/22/2011) is available [here](#), and a map indicating the extent of influenza-like illness in the United States may be viewed [here](#). Archives of previous *FluViews* may be accessed [here](#).

5. Influenza Vaccine Effectiveness

On October 25, 2011, *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* journal published an [article](#), “Efficacy and effectiveness of influenza vaccines: a systematic review and meta-analysis.” CDC has extensive information related to influenza vaccine effectiveness for the [general public](#) and [health professionals](#). In addition, CDC has issued [key points](#) related to how well influenza vaccines work.

6. CDC Guidance on Revaccination Following First Immunization with Jet Injector

In follow-up to the influenza vaccine/jet injector issue mentioned in the key points on October 21, CDC has addressed whether revaccination is needed/recommended for persons who received their influenza shot via jet injector this season.

Q: What should I do if got an influenza vaccine using a needle-free jet injector? Do I need to get vaccinated again?

A: Based on current information, CDC and FDA believe that it is not necessary for people who got their influenza vaccine via jet injector to be revaccinated.

7. Flu Vaccine Finder is LIVE!

[Flu Vaccine Finder](#) is now live! It can be viewed now in Firefox, and should be available through other browsers (i.e., Chrome, IE) soon.

Flu Vaccine Finder [outreach materials](#) and [support information](#) are available. Specific help topics are available as shown below:

***Flu Vaccine Finder* Help Topics**

[Flu Vaccine Finder Basics](#)
[Information about Partners and Providers](#)

Returning Flu Vaccine Finder Providers

[Process for Returning Providers](#)
[Updating Data in Fusion Tables \(Large Providers\)](#)
[Returning Provider Webinar Material](#)

First Time Flu Vaccine Finder Providers

[Getting Started \(Small and Large Providers\)](#)
[Adding locations for small providers \(10 or fewer locations\)](#)
[Adding locations for large providers \(more than 10 locations\)](#)

Troubleshooting

[Troubleshooting for Providers](#)
[Troubleshooting for Flu Vaccine Finder Users](#)

Please direct questions about Flu Vaccine Finder to Cindy Fowler at ctg7@cdc.gov.

8. Additional CDC Free Communication Resources!

[Downloadable print materials, audio/video and web tools](#)

- New PSA, English and Spanish versions, broadcast quality available
- New *Medscape* Expert Commentary on this season's recommendations
- Various new products to be added this week (posters/flyers, OB/GYN and specialist provider tools, and vaccination clinic stickers; most will be available in English and Spanish)

[Order free print materials](#) (New materials to be added in late October.)

[Flu Vaccination Pledge](#)

- Widget to add a link to the website available at www.cdc.gov/flu/nivw/pledge/widget.html

[Information Portal for Health Professionals](#)

- [CDC's Flu Home Page](#) covers disease and prevention basics, surveillance data, vaccine supply and coverage data.
- Updates in progress: matte articles and media toolkit

For more information or questions regarding CDC's national influenza vaccine communications, contact fluinbox@cdc.gov.

9. Summit Influenza Pocket Information Guide Still Available!

Every year, the Summit collaborates with the Immunization Action Coalition to create and distribute the *Influenza Pocket Information Guide*. The 2011-2012 edition is still available for [order](#).

10. Summit Website Offers Wonderful Resources on Influenza Vaccination!

Remember to visit the [Summit website](#) for the latest on influenza immunization resources!