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October 8, 2009

TO: Los Angeles County Department Heads

FROM: Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H. *jef*
Director and Health Officer

SUBJECT: **H1N1 INFLUENZA VACCINATION**

The memo is to update you on the Department of Public Health's (DPH) efforts to respond to pandemic influenza H1N1 and to inform you of that your department's assistance may needed to implement vaccine distribution to the residents of Los Angeles County.

Background

On May 2, 2009 the Department of Public Health (DPH) recorded Los Angeles County's first case of Influenza A H1N1. Since the emergence of pandemic H1N1 influenza Los Angeles County has experienced sustained and widespread circulation of the virus including over hundreds of hospitalizations and 33 deaths. In response, DPH is implementing its pandemic influenza response plan which includes: (1) outreach to the media and the public to reinforce the message of prevention and who should receive the vaccination; (2) disease surveillance and reporting; and (4) implementation of activities to make H1N1 vaccine available to the public.

H1N1 Vaccine Distribution

On September 14, 2009, the Federal Drug Administration announced that it had approved four vaccines against the H1N1 virus. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) identified 5 priority groups for initial receipt of the H1N1 vaccine. These groups are: (1) pregnant women; (2) people living with or caring for infants under 6 months of age; (3) emergency medical services personnel and health care workers; (4) children and young adults from 6 months through 24 years; and (5) people aged 25 through 64 years with chronic medical conditions like heart or lung disease, asthma, diabetes, or weakened immune systems. We estimate that approximately half of the County's population will fall into one of these five priority groups and will be eligible to receive vaccine.

DPH H1N1 vaccine distribution approach is primarily focused on supplying private health care provider so that persons can get vaccine through their usual source of care. We have been working with providers to encourage them to order vaccine for their patients, and to date over 3,000 providers have signed-up to receive H1N1 vaccine. In addition, for those persons who have no regular source of care, DPH is implementing a series of H1N1 influenza vaccination Point of Distribution (POD) throughout the County estimated to begin on October 23, 2009.

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PODs are locations activated by DPH to provide H1N1 influenza vaccinations to the public. PODs may be staffed by a combination of DPH and other county staff, city staff, volunteers and paid contracted employees. Although over potential 350 PODs sessions have been planned the actual number and location of PODs activated and staff will depend on vaccine availability and the course of the virus during the coming weeks and months.

Emergency Operations

As you may recall, a local emergency declaration related to H1N1 influenza is still in effect. The DPH Departmental Operations Center, with support of the County Office of Emergency Management (OEM), has been activated.

DPH directly or through OEM may be calling on County departments for assistance in a variety of areas including:

- Staffing for PODS
- Logistical support (use of facilities and or equipment)
- Expedited processes for ordering equipment and supplies

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have provided funds to local health departments to assist with this effort. We are prepared to develop Departmental Service Orders (DSOs) to defray the costs your departments may incur to assist in implementing the H1N1 vaccination PODs.

OEM has scheduled an H1N1 update meeting with your Department Emergency Coordinators on October 15, 2009 at the County Emergency Operations Center.

Thank you in advance for your assistance and cooperation on this important effort.

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c: Each Supervisor
Chief Executive Officer