



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona

Janice K. Brewer  
Governor

Neal Young  
Director

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Dear Colleagues:

The H1N1 Virus is particularly problematic for people with developmental and other disabilities as well as their caretakers. According to a recent CDC report, nearly two-thirds of child fatalities resulting from H1N1 were children with epilepsy, cerebral palsy or other neurodevelopmental conditions. Adults with developmental disabilities also are at risk due to the high number of the population's underlying health conditions.

The Department of Economic Security has worked with the Department of Health Services (DHS) to help assure higher priority access for persons with developmental disabilities and their caregivers when the H1N1 vaccine becomes available to the public. Initial shipments of H1N1 vaccine arriving in Arizona this week will be the live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) which cannot be given to persons with underlying medical conditions because of the increased risk of adverse affects of this particular form of the vaccine. The next shipments estimated to arrive later this month will contain the *inactivated* H1N1 vaccine which can be given to people with underlying health conditions.

There are 1,700 health care providers registered with the DHS to receive vaccine shipments. While providers may not charge for the vaccine, there may administrative fees to cover other expenses. Health care providers may vary from physician offices, pharmacies or flu clinics to county public health clinics.

The Division strongly recommends that all providers for persons with developmental disabilities monitor the DHS web page for updated information regarding the availability and locations of where the vaccine will be available as well as other updates on the virus. Providers should make every effort to ensure that consumers and staff are vaccinated. As with any medical treatment, parents of minors and court appointed guardians must provide informed consent. The vaccine cannot be given to anyone with an allergy to eggs.

Please take a few minutes to review the guidelines released by DHS for monitoring and preventing the spread of H1N1 (Swine) Influenza at:  
<http://www.azdhs.gov/flu/h1n1/pdfs/providers/Guidelines%20for%20Long%20Term%20Care%20final.pdf>.

Thank you for your attention to this important information and for your ongoing commitment to those we are here to serve.

Sincerely,

Barbara Brent  
Assistant Director  
Division of Developmental Disabilities