



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

Jim Doyle, Governor
Karen E. Timberlake, Secretary

H1N1 Situation Report

September 23, 2009 at 12:00 Hours

Overview

The Department of Health Services (DHS) has continued statewide H1N1 surveillance throughout summer. As fall and winter approaches, DHS will continue to provide guidance to local health departments and clinicians based upon the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations and the H1N1 situation in Wisconsin. In addition, DHS will monitor the seasonal influenza strain this season per standard protocol.

Based upon local, statewide and national reports, as well as surveillance in the southern hemisphere, the H1N1 virus is continuing to circulate in the population and is similar in severity to seasonal influenza. Therefore, DHS will be focusing on hospitalization rates and fatalities to monitor the virulence of the disease. Case counts may be used initially and sporadically this fall to identify the rate of spread of the H1N1 virus, but hospitalization and fatality information will be more useful and accurate in determining the severity of the disease in Wisconsin.

People are encouraged to follow good hygiene precautions such as hand washing, covering their cough/sneeze with their sleeve or a tissue, and staying home when ill. As H1N1 vaccine becomes available, people are encouraged to become immunized. The CDC is recommending that priority groups be the first to receive the immunization as the H1N1 manufacturing process continues and is phased in until anyone who wants to receive the vaccine will be able to do so. More information is detailed under the vaccine portion of the situation report.

The pandemic website (pandemic.wisconsin.gov) is routinely updated when new CDC guidance is issued or other relevant information becomes available. In addition, DHS is encouraging the general public to call 2-1-1 with general questions or their health care provider if they become ill.

DHS will resume issuing regular situation reports as necessary. At this time, it is anticipated these reports will be issued weekly on Wednesday around noon.

H1N1 Surveillance

Overall, influenza-like illness activity in Wisconsin is higher than normal and sporadic cases of H1N1 have been identified statewide. The southern region has a higher number of H1N1 cases due to a large number of cases at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, although UW-Madison reports that the number of students they saw for influenza-like symptoms declined last week. The other four public health regions – (northeastern, northern, southeastern and western) continue to report low influenza-like illness activity. With schools now open statewide, it is expected that influenza-like illnesses will increase.

Information from emergency room admissions and family practitioners indicates there was a slight rise in H1N1 cases the past two weeks, but those emergency room admissions have already started to decline. A decline in cases is not typical of what you see in accelerated influenza activity, so it is expected that Wisconsin has not begun to experience widespread H1N1 influenza activity.

No H1N1 viruses in the state have been resistant to anti-virals and 99% of laboratory confirmed cases in Wisconsin have been identified as H1N1. Wisconsin had 8 deaths related to H1N1 influenza and 239 hospitalizations from April 25 to August 29, 2009. New hospitalization and death rates are being calculated since September 1, 2009, and Wisconsin had 6 hospitalizations and 0 deaths since September 1st.

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Seasonal Influenza Update

Seasonal influenza activity is expected to increase later this autumn, although 99% of current confirmed laboratory cases in Wisconsin have been identified as H1N1.

The CDC indicates there is plenty of season influenza vaccine available. Seasonal influenza vaccine is being shipped to providers statewide and DHS is encouraging people to receive their seasonal influenza shot now, prior to the H1N1 vaccine becoming available. DHS will be following CDC recommendations in encouraging the public to receive both seasonal and H1N1 influenza vaccines as both viruses will be circulating this season.

H1N1 Vaccine Update

The H1N1 vaccine has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The vaccine is being manufactured using the seasonal influenza vaccine process, and the CDC is indicating the vaccine is safe and effective.

The CDC has established a vaccine distribution system where H1N1 vaccine orders are placed through each state's public health department. DHS has already established the ability for public and private health care providers to place their orders with the state. DHS will be able to place the first H1N1 vaccine order on September 30th with the CDC (all states will do so on that date), and the vaccine distributors will ship orders directly to providers. It is expected providers in Wisconsin will receive initial shipments by early to mid-October.

The CDC anticipates there will be enough H1N1 vaccine for anyone who wants it, although they are using a phased-in approach for distribution because manufacturers are still producing the vaccine. In a normal year, the U.S. distributes 100 million doses of seasonal vaccine and the CDC has ordered 195 million doses of H1N1 vaccine, with the ability to order more.

Because manufacturers are still producing the vaccine, the CDC is recommending that the target groups listed below be the first to receive the H1N1 vaccine:

- Pregnant women
- Household contacts and caregivers for children less than 6 months of age
- Healthcare and emergency medical services personnel
- All people from 6 months through 24 years of age
- Persons 25-64 years of age with conditions associated with higher risk of complications from influenza

Additional vaccine will be manufactured and distributed throughout the influenza season and the CDC is indicating there will eventually be enough vaccine for anyone who wishes to receive it.

DHS Activities

DHS continued H1N1 surveillance since the virus was first identified this spring. In addition, the Division of Public Health has held regular conference calls, webcasts and issued guidance to health professional statewide.

DHS has also been working closely with the Division of Public Instruction, the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene and local and tribal health departments. These partners will continue to be critical as DHS continues to conduct virus surveillance, closely watch any surges on the health care system, and monitor vaccine and anti-viral supplies.

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Partner Items

DHS is coordinating with 211 Wisconsin to gather information about public H1N1 flu clinics as they become scheduled this fall in order to help answer questions from the public. DHS is also staffing an H1N1 awareness booth at the farmers market in Madison in conjunction with the Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs' activities for preparedness month.

New Guidance Issued

New guidance issued by the CDC or the Division of Public Health is available online at <http://pandemic.wisconsin.gov/>. Items recently published include:

- CDC Guidance on Helping Child Care and Early Childhood Programs Respond to Influenza during the 2009–2010 Influenza Season

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