

H1N1 Vaccine Set to Roll Out Early This Month

BY MITCHEL L. ZOLER

Vaccine against 2009 pandemic influenza A(H1N1) was expected to start reaching U.S. providers as soon as Oct. 2 based on the planned opening of the orders process on Sept. 30, a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention official said at a meeting of the National Vaccine Advisory Committee.

This timetable applies to the vaccines

that received approval from the Food and Drug Administration Sept. 15, said Dr. Jay Butler, who heads the H1N1 vaccine implementation program for the CDC.

The U.S. government has arranged to purchase 194 million H1N1 vaccine doses, which will be supplied to the U.S. public at no charge for the vaccine (although there will be charges for ancillary materials), said Dr. Robin Robinson of the Biomedical Advanced Research and De-

velopment Authority of the Department of Health and Human Services.

During the first 2 weeks of September, 4% of visits to CDC sentinel providers of outpatient or emergency department care were for flu-like illness. That rate is as high as that seen in February 2009, the most recent peak of seasonal influenza in the United States. The new spike of flu cases has been most dramatic in states located in the southeastern United States.

The reason for this isn't known, but may relate to the earlier start of school in many communities in that region, said Dr. Anne Schuchat, director of the CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases.

Based on recent data on immunogenicity, the new H1N1 vaccine will be administered to people aged 10 and older as a single dose, Dr. Schuchat said.

Until safety data from broad field use are available, the CDC must rely on the fact that the new H1N1 vaccines were made by the same methods that have



The new H1N1 vaccine will be administered to people aged 10 and older as a single dose.

DR. SCHUCHAT

been applied in past years to produce hundreds of millions of doses of seasonal flu vaccine, Dr. Schuchat said. This record of safety should be balanced against the clear health risk that H1N1 presents, a comparison that should convince most people to get immunized, she said. ■

REGISTER AT WWW.SDEFDERM.COM

SKIN DISEASE EDUCATION FOUNDATION'S 34TH ANNUAL

Hawaii Dermatology Seminar™

A CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY 14-19, 2010

HILTON WAIKOLOA HOTEL, BIG ISLAND HAWAII

SKIN DISEASE EDUCATION FOUNDATION DIRECTORS

MEDICAL DERMATOLOGY DIRECTOR

Joseph F. Fowler, Jr., MD

Clinical Professor of Dermatology
University of Louisville, Louisville, KY
Dermatology Specialists PSC, Louisville, KY

COSMETIC DERMATOLOGY DIRECTORS

David J. Goldberg, MD, JD.

Clinical Professor
Mount Sinai School of Medicine
Director, Skin Laser & Surgery Specialists of NY/NJ
New York, NY

Christopher B. Zachary, MBBS, FRCP

Professor and Chair
Department of Dermatology
University of California, Irvine, CA

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Lawrence F. Eichenfield, MD

Professor, Pediatrics and Medicine (Dermatology)
Rady Children's Hospital
UCSD School of Medicine
San Diego, CA

Ashfaq A. Marghoob, MD

Associate Attending at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
Associate Professor at SUNY Stony Brook
Memorial Sloan Kettering Skin Cancer Center
Hauppauge, NY

FEATURING:

Melanoma: Clinical Update

Hot Topics in Medical Dermatology

Psoriasis 2010: How are the Newer Treatments Stacking Up?

Latest Developments in Pediatric Dermatology

Understanding Lasers, and Lights

Cosmetic Dermatology: What's Ahead for 2010

This activity has been approved for
36 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™

REGISTRATION

Physician	\$ 495
Hawaii Physician	\$ 400
Spouse / Guest	\$ 250
PA / NP/ Office Personnel (non physician)	\$ 350
Residents in Training	\$ 300
Registration Fees: Children	
ages 13 -16	\$ 200
ages 5 - 12	\$ 150

The opinions expressed at Skin Disease Education Foundation seminars do not necessarily reflect those of Skin Disease Education Foundation, Elsevier Inc. or the supporters of the seminars. Elsevier Inc. will not assume responsibility for damages, loss, or claims of any kind arising from or related to the information contained in presentations, including any claims related to the products, drugs or services mentioned.

Jointly sponsored by



SKIN DISEASE
EDUCATION
FOUNDATION
an Elsevier business

FOR COMPLETE REGISTRATION INFORMATION VISIT WWW.SDEFDERM.COM

Medicare Covers H1N1 Vaccine Administration

Medicare will cover administration of both the seasonal influenza vaccine and the vaccine against 2009 pandemic influenza A(H1N1) virus.

In a notice to physicians and other health care providers, officials at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services said that the same billing rules will apply to the pandemic H1N1 vaccine and the seasonal vaccine. However, because the pandemic H1N1 vaccine will be provided at no cost by the government, Medicare will pay providers only for administration.

The CMS has issued two new billing codes to address H1N1 vaccine this season. Providers can use G9141 for pandemic influenza A(H1N1) immunization administration, including physician counseling of the patient and family. Payment for G9141 will be the same as that for the administration of the seasonal influenza vaccine.

The CMS also has created a billing code, G9142, for the pandemic influenza A(H1N1) vaccine itself. However, that code will not trigger payment. Nor will Medicare pay for an office visit when its sole purpose is administration of either seasonal influenza vaccine or pandemic H1N1 vaccine.

Private insurers are also planning to extend coverage to the pandemic H1N1 vaccine.

—Mary Ellen Schneider