



- Please immediately bring to the attention of all doctors -

Date: 22 September 2009 Contact telephone number: 8226-7177 (24 hours/7 days)

## National Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 Influenza Vaccination Program

The TGA has recently registered and approved Panvax® H1N1 vaccine to protect against pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza. The national Pandemic (H1N1) Influenza Vaccination Program will commence on **30 September 2009**. Whilst the current wave of the pandemic is declining in Australia we are still seeing infection and deaths. Unlike seasonal influenza, pandemic influenza is not just a winter infection. We may have importation of the virus from infected travellers exposed due to the large number of cases now occurring in the Northern Hemisphere. A safe and effective vaccine is the most important intervention in a pandemic, and the pandemic H1N1 vaccine will provide protection against this infection, will assist to minimise the amount of influenza circulating in the community and will help protect against any future waves of the virus.

**Eligibility:** In Australia, the first priority groups to receive the vaccine will be those at higher risk of complications of influenza due to underlying medical conditions, and parents and guardians of children aged 0 to 6 months. Health care and community care workers (including volunteers and students) who have direct contact with these groups are also in priority group 1. Whilst emphasis is on targeting those priority groups, the opportunistic vaccination of anyone who wishes to protect themselves against pandemic influenza is also encouraged. Vaccination of children 9 years and under will commence once safety data in this age group is available. People who have returned a positive laboratory result for pandemic (H1N1) 09 influenza will not require vaccination.

**2010 Seasonal Influenza Vaccine:** The composition of next season's influenza vaccine is yet to be determined. However, even if it contains H1N1 2009, seasonal influenza vaccine will still be necessary next year to provide protection against other strains of influenza virus.

**Distribution:** The vaccine will be distributed by SA Health to General Practitioners who are registered vaccine providers, public and participating private hospitals, participating aged care facilities, Aboriginal health services, and public sector clinics via local government and Community Health Centres in country South Australia. All immunisation providers will receive some vaccine prior to 30 September 09. The first delivery of vaccine will NOT be through the routine ordering process; instead the number of doses received will be allocated by the Vaccine Distribution Centre. All subsequent doses must be ordered through the specific H1N1 vaccine order form received with the first vaccine delivery. Public sector clinics will be run as needed to take some pressure off busy general practices. The locations of these will be announced over the coming few days and will be available on the DH website at [www.flu.sa.gov.au](http://www.flu.sa.gov.au).

All vaccine providers will receive a separate communication dealing with vaccine presentation, storage and multi dose vial (MDV) use. The TGA has reviewed the issues associated with MDV use and has recommended that the vials be discarded after 24 hours. Guidelines for MDV use have been produced by ATAGI and the RACGP and can be found at <http://flu.sa.gov.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=ciE7Yu4zwuo%3d&tabid=66>.

**Adverse event reporting:** Adverse events should be reported to the Immunisation Section as is current practice, on phone 8226 7177 and fax 8226 7197.

**Additional information on Antivirals:** From the end of September 2009 Tamiflu suspension will no longer be available from the stockpile. Tamiflu powder from 30, 45, or 75 mg capsules can be mixed with a sweet food product such as chocolate syrup, dessert topping, apple sauce, or yoghurt to make it acceptable to children who cannot swallow capsules. The mixture must be swallowed immediately after preparation. More detailed instructions are available on the SA Health Website at [www.flu.sa.gov.au](http://www.flu.sa.gov.au).

**Dr Ann Koehler - Director, Communicable Disease Control Branch**

*Information contained within this advice should be treated as confidential and is for the intended recipient only.*

PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT