

October 23, 2009

Dear Community Partner:

**RE: H1N1 Vaccination Program Impacts on Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit Programs and Services**

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit staff will begin offering public pandemic H1N1 influenza (pH1N1) vaccination clinics on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. We have currently scheduled four weeks of clinics but are prepared to extend this to meet public demand for vaccine. We will also be distributing pH1N1 vaccine to a number of health care providers and facilities in order to support vaccination of their staff and high-risk patients.

The pH1N1 immunization program involves a major redeployment of most of our agency staff to the vaccination clinics. All agency nurses, with the exception of the *Your Health Connection* core team and some vaccine preventable disease team members who co-ordinate immunization clinics in the schools, will participate in the pH1N1 clinic rotations. Our casual nurses will also be working in the clinics.

As well, there are five other non-nursing roles (tech runners, registration staff, clinic leaders, after care and greeters), that will be filled by non-nursing agency staff (public health inspectors, tobacco enforcement officers, nutrition, health promotion, dental and administrative staff).

The remaining staff time, including technology, human resource, administration and communications personnel, will be redirected to support our pH1N1 response and to provide essential public health services. These essential services include:

- Response to public health hazard complaints and emergencies, food safety complaints, recalls, and other urgent situations; adverse water events related to all regulated public drinking water supplies.
- Outbreak response and management of reportable communicable diseases, (including animal bite reporting for rabies investigations, food and water-related issues).
- Communicable disease investigation and case management.
- Immunization clinics for childhood illness, and the school immunization programs for hepatitis B, HPV and meningococcal C.
- Vaccine distribution to physician offices and health care facilities.

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- Emergency dental treatment programs.
- Postpartum phone calls to all new mothers.
- Smoke-free Ontario complaint enforcement.
- After-hours on-call coverage.
- Health Connection phone line.
- Liaison and consultation with key community partners related to pH1N1 response.

All other programs and services including attendance at meetings with partner agencies will be deferred, delayed or provided in a limited capacity during this time.

Agency staff will communicate their availability directly to partners for previously scheduled meetings or events. We appreciate your understanding of the impacts this will have and look forward to recommencing our work with you at the end of this response period.

Sincerely,



Charles Gardner, MD, CCFP, MHSc, FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health

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