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Sent: Friday, September 04, 2009 6:26 PM
To: NCIRD Immunization Grantee Mailbox (CDC)
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Subject: Update on Seasonal Flu Vaccine Supply, 09-10

CDC has received a number of questions recently about the current estimate for seasonal flu vaccine supply for 2009-10, including the any changes since the estimate was shared in late June/early July; the potential impact of h1n1 vaccine production on seasonal supply; and reasons that providers wanting to purchase vaccine in August and September have experienced challenges. The purpose of this message is to address those questions.

In late June/early July, vaccine production estimates for seasonal flu vaccine for the 09-10 season were shared publicly at the ACIP and National Influenza Vaccine Summit meetings. At that time, overall production estimate for the US was 118 million doses of vaccine across all five manufacturers. The estimate from manufacturers this week is between 114-115 million doses, which is slightly lower (3%) than, but not substantially changed from, the earlier estimate. Slight changes in production estimates are to be anticipated because of the uncertainties involved in making biological products. Of note, this updated estimate for the season still slightly exceeds the amount of flu vaccine that has been distributed in a single year in the US by (113 million doses were distributed in the 08-09 season).

H1N1 vaccine production efforts currently underway are being carried out in such a way to minimize any impact upon the total amount of seasonal vaccine available. In fact, the timing of H1N1 vaccine production, as directed by the federal government, was designed to allow sufficient time for manufacturers to be able to carry out their planned production of seasonal influenza vaccine.

Despite the vaccine production estimates that exceed past usage, however, providers seeking to order vaccine currently and during the past several weeks have experienced challenges in doing so. There are several reasons for these challenges. First, in early June, one of the manufacturers adjusted down their seasonal flu vaccine estimates, which resulted in some customers switching prebooks to other products. These switches reserved unprebooked vaccines that were still available for order, making doses that are normally available for order during the summer and early fall months no longer available. Second, there may be more providers seeking to purchase vaccine at this time of year than normally occurs due to (1) recent H1N1 disease and its coverage in the media that may have increased the demand for seasonal flu vaccination, and (2) a desire to complete seasonal flu vaccination efforts in advance of H1N1 vaccination efforts to the extent possible.

As in past seasons, availability of seasonal vaccine may change as the season progresses because some prebooks do not materialize into purchases. Providers looking to order additional vaccine should be encouraged to use the supplies that they have now and continue to look for additional flu vaccine for purchase in the coming weeks. To assist providers in finding flu vaccine available for purchase, the National Influenza Vaccine Summit supports IVATS, the Influenza Vaccine Availability Tracking System, which provides information about vaccine manufacturers and distributors with vaccine available for purchase. IVATS can be found at: <http://www.preventinfluenza.org/ivats/>. The information in IVATS is updated throughout the influenza vaccination season.

Thanks,
Jeanne