



Jim Doyle
Governor

Karen E. Timberlake
Secretary

State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

1 WEST WILSON STREET
P O BOX 2659
MADISON WI 53701-2659

608-266-1251
FAX: 608-267-2832
TTY: 888-701-1253
dhs.wisconsin.gov

Date: September 10, 2009

To: Emergency Medical Service Providers, Local Health Officers and Tribal Health Directors

From: Joe Cordova
Strategic National Stockpile Coordinator

Dana Sechler, NREMT-P, CCEMTP
Wisconsin EMS Section Office

Subject: Use of Emergency Medical Services Personnel in Public Health Immunization Clinics

To assist you with administering Influenza A (H1N1) monovalent vaccines, the Division of Public Health encourages you to use Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel in administering vaccine. Liability protection for administering Influenza A (H1N1) monovalent vaccines is provided by the federal Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act (details below).

There are two ways that a tribal or local public health agency may partner with EMS personnel to assist with the administration of the Influenza A (H1N1) monovalent vaccines. They are as follows:

The EMS service director (or medical director) may coordinate with the tribal or local public health agency to use the EMS service resources, including personnel and vehicles. The EMS personnel would function under the EMS service's medical direction to participate in the administration of Influenza A (H1N1) monovalent vaccine. EMS agencies will need to update their Operation Plan, and adopt the Wisconsin EMS protocol and procedure for vaccinations when they become available in the near future. Watch the EMS web page <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/ems/index.htm>. In addition to their protocol and procedure EMS personnel will need to follow all public health guidelines. In this scenario, the authority for the Paramedic or EMT to vaccinate is shared between the EMS agency, and the tribal or local public health agency.

The tribal or local public health agency may request and use volunteers or paid contract employees to assist in the administration of Influenza A (H1N1) monovalent vaccines as part of their local practices, and/or in accordance with the local Public Health Emergency Plan or Mass Clinic Plan. Individual Paramedics and EMTs may volunteer or be paid as a contract employee to assist the tribal or local public health agency with these

vaccinations. The Paramedics and/or EMTs would be working under the immediate direction of the tribal or local public health agency and can be provided with 'Just in Time' training, as appropriate. It is the responsibility of the tribal or local public health agency to verify the Paramedics' and/or EMTs' skill level and ability to administer vaccine. When an individual Paramedic or EMT is acting in this capacity, he/she would not be working under his/her EMS license, as he/she is not acting in conjunction with a recognized EMS agency or medical director at that point in time. In this scenario the Paramedic or EMT is a volunteer or paid contract employee. Authority to vaccinate is from the tribal or local public health agency.

The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services has declared a public health emergency and has enacted the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act as a result of the outbreak of novel Influenza A (H1N1) 2009. The Secretary has included novel H1N1 vaccines as a covered countermeasure under the PREP Act. This provides immunity from tort liability (except for willful misconduct) for claims of loss, caused arising out of, relating to, or resulting from administration or use of covered countermeasures. The PREP Act provides liability immunity to licensed health professionals or other individuals who are authorized to prescribe, administer, or dispense covered countermeasures under the law of the State. Therefore it is essential that EMS agencies and personnel work closely with their medical director and the tribal health director or local health officer.

Please share this letter with other interested parties. If you have any questions, please contact:

Joe Cordova at 608-267-9010 or joe.cordova@dhs.wisconsin.gov and/or
Dana Sechler at (608) 266-8853 or dana.sechler@dhs.wisconsin.gov

Resources:

Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act -
<http://www.hhs.gov/disasters/discussion/planners/prepact/index.html>

EMS Scope of Practice documents -
http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/ems/License_certification/scope_of_practice.htm