

Update on the 2009 H1N1 Flu Pandemic

March 8, 2010

Based upon the recommendation provided by Executive Director Nancy Dragani of the Ohio Emergency Management Agency, Governor Strickland will terminate the emergency proclamation of October 7, 2009 on **March 31, 2010 at 11:59 PM**. Following this date and time, the administration of vaccinations by Ohio EMS personnel will be outside the Ohio EMS scope of practice; and therefore, strictly prohibited.

As stated in my last update, the state of Ohio demobilized its H1N1 response plan on February 8, 2010. The incidence of confirmed cases of H1N1 influenza in Ohio has remained minimal for the past six weeks, but this virus has not been eradicated. Our EMS community will continue to provide treatment and transport for patients with H1N1 influenza despite the termination of the emergency proclamation. All members of our EMS community must continue to exercise these basic, yet potentially life-saving, measures to prevent the spread of disease.

- Get vaccinated! There are sufficient supplies of the H1N1 influenza vaccine for all individuals who desire to receive it and it readily available at public health clinics and many physicians' offices.
- Exercise diligent hand washing before and after all contacts with patients and other individuals.
- Don the appropriate level of personal protective equipment (PPE) for all patient encounters.
- Continue to obtain education about H1N1 influenza. The H1N1 influenza resource materials, including the *Vaccinations for Ohio EMS Personnel* training module, will remain posted on the Ohio Department of Public Safety, Division of EMS website at www.ems.ohio.gov.

The contributions of Ohio EMS personnel during Ohio's H1N1 influenza mass immunization campaign were significant and have had a positive impact upon disease prevention. In addition, our Ohio EMS agencies have steadfastly served the public and the emergency care system during this pandemic despite enduring weeks of increased call and transport volumes combined with overwhelmed emergency departments and hospitals. On behalf of the Ohio Department of Public Safety, Division of EMS, we applaud each of you for your dedicated service.

Carol A. Cunningham, M.D., FACEP, FAAEM
State Medical Director
Ohio Department of Public Safety, Division of EMS