

NEWS RELEASE #6

PRIORITY GROUPS –RISK GROUPS FOR H1N1 VACCINATION

The Center for Disease Control and the Iowa Dept of Public Health have set certain guidelines, determined by studies and statistics , that show that pregnant women, young children, and children with certain chronic medical conditions are at highest risk to develop more severe problems if they get the H1N1 viral disease.

The vaccine supply to Tama County has been very limited and sporadically coming into the county. The state is allotting vaccine utilizing a base amount and the county population. We know that we will not get enough vaccine to give to the entire population. Tama County Public Health has chosen to comply with the CDC guidelines for giving vaccinations to the highest risk people. The first vaccine we have was given to pregnant women and their families if they fall between the ages of 6 months to 24 years, and to health care workers and front line emergency responders.

The week of October 26th we hope to expand the risk group to care providers (parents, siblings, and day care providers) of infants less than 6 months old because these infants cannot receive the vaccine. We will also expand to children ages 6 months to 4 years old and children 5-18 years old with chronic medical conditions like asthma, heart problems, diabetes, neurologic and neuromuscular disorders.

So far there has been a VERY low incidence of H1N1 disease reported in people 65 years and older. This population is more at risk for the regular seasonal influenza at this time.

“We would love to be able to vaccinate the entire population this week but due to the guidelines and vaccine supply this is just not possible, says Linda Rosenberger, director of Tama County Public Health. Eventually everyone eligible should be able to receive the vaccine but for now we ask that you please be patient and take precautions to prevent yourself from getting the disease or spreading the disease. The remainder of the vaccine may not be arriving in our county until mid November, which is still plenty of time to give you protection from the peak flu season.”