



CHEMUNG COUNTY

Department of Health



103 Washington Street
P.O. BOX 588
Elmira, New York 14902-0588
(607) 737-2028 FAX (607) 737-2016

Robert E. Page
Public Health Director

Lou Ann Lance, RN, MSN
Director of Patient Services

October 21, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As you may have heard, a new influenza virus, the 2009 H1N1 (Swine) influenza virus, was first identified in the United States in late April, 2009. The virus has caused illness ranging from mild to severe, including hospitalizations and deaths in adults and children. Many children have gotten H1N1 infection and there have been large outbreaks in some schools across the country. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices has recommended that the following groups receive the first doses of H1N1 influenza vaccine:

- Children aged 6 months through 24 years
- Pregnant women
- People who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age
- Health care and emergency medical services workers, and
- People ages 25 through 64 years who have certain health conditions such as HIV, diabetes, heart or lung disease.

Vaccination is the best way to protect your child from this potentially serious disease. The Chemung County Health Department is working with your child's school to give the H1N1 influenza vaccine to children either during school or after school. We will hold vaccination clinics beginning this fall, and **your child's school will let you know the specific dates/times once vaccine is on hand.** There will be no cost to you for this vaccine. Children under 10 years of age will need two doses of vaccine spaced 3-4 weeks apart.

A vaccine consent form and a Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) titled "What you need to know" are included with this letter. Please take the time to read the "What you need to know" form about the disease and the vaccine.

If you want your child to get the vaccine, **you must sign and date the included consent form and return it to the school by November 2nd.** No vaccine will be administered to anyone at any of the school clinics unless a consent form has been completed and submitted to the school by the deadline. On the day of the vaccination, please have your child dressed in a way that allows easy access to the upper arm, near the shoulder – such as having them wear a t-shirt under their outer clothing.

Please visit the CDC's H1N1 influenza website at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/> and also <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/parents> for more information especially for parents. Your child's health care provider also can answer your questions about the H1N1 influenza virus and will be able to give your child seasonal influenza vaccine and may be able to give your child the H1N1 vaccine.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Page, Director
Chemung County Health Department