

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Executives
AHCA/ NCAL Leadership and Members

FROM: Janice Zalen, Sr. Dir. of Special Programs

SUBJECT: **H1N1 Pandemic Influenza Update No. 18**

DATE: July 9, 2009

As of July 2, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported 33,902 confirmed and probable novel H1N1 influenza cases in the U.S., about 3,000 hospitalizations, and 170 deaths. As was widely reported by the press last week, the case count is an underestimate of the actual number of pandemic H1N1 cases in the U.S. CDC estimates that there have been at least 1 million cases of pandemic H1N1 in the U.S. This estimate is derived from population-based surveys in areas with focal outbreaks of pandemic H1N1 that have reported the incidence of influenza-like-illness to be approximately 6%.

White House H1N1 Influenza Preparedness Summit

Today, the White House convened an H1N1 Influenza Preparedness Summit for state and local government officials that sent a very strong message to start now to plan aggressively and prepare for the fall flu season and the ongoing H1N1 flu outbreak. President Obama gave a brief presentation, videolinked from Italy. He stated that the potential for a significant outbreak is looming and the federal government is promoting vigilance. He stressed that state and local government must prepare now. Other speakers included Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Secretary Janet Napolitano, Department of Education Secretary Arne Duncan, CDC Director Tom Frieden and State Health Department officials.

Secretary Sebelius Announces New Grant Availability and Describes Federal H1N1 Vaccine Program

Secretary Sebelius announced a new preparedness grant program totaling \$350 million. Of that, \$260 million will go to states and localities to step up their preparedness efforts and \$90 million will go to hospitals to prepare for

medical surges. The grant announcement, applications and information will be posted in a day or so. Applications will be due July 24 and money should be awarded by July 31.

Secretary Sebelius stated that although no final decision has been made regarding H1N1 vaccine, HHS is anticipating a massive, voluntary immunization program this fall. A limited H1N1 vaccine supply likely will be ready in mid-October and state and local governments should be working on prioritization and distribution plans. Based on current knowledge, targeted populations are likely to be school age children, adults with underlying conditions and emergency personnel. State and local leaders will need to enhance their pandemic plans to include strategies to help with the massive vaccination effort. This will be a federally-funded vaccine program.

Sebelius noted that the President outlined a National Framework for Response to the 2009 H1N1 virus, and that response is based on four pillars of preparedness to guide actions at all levels of government: surveillance, community mitigation, vaccination, and communication.

Secretary Sebelius announced that the federal government will centralize communications about H1N1 and seasonal flu on the federal government's new Web site at www.flu.gov. The expanded site builds on the pandemic planning information on www.pandemicflu.gov and incorporates information about the novel H1N1 flu as well as the seasonal flu.

Finally, Sebelius asked attendees to go home and host their own pandemic summit and to reach out to include private as well as public stakeholders.

DHS Secretary Napolitano

In response to a question, DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano explained that the Stafford Act was designed for natural disasters, e.g., hurricanes, and is not triggered by a pandemic. She emphasized that regardless of what happens in the fall, planning and preparing for H1N1 will not be wasted as it will have application to many other scenarios. She stressed that planning should include thinking about the nuts and bolts questions, e.g., making sure payroll will be processed and planning for high absenteeism.

Stephen Redd, Influenza Coordination Unit, CDC

Dr. Redd pointed out that since we have new facts and knowledge about the H1N1 pandemic influenza virus, states and localities need new plans and new exercises.

Damon Arnold, Illinois Department of Public Health

Dr. Arnold stated that Illinois will have a mass seasonal influenza program this fall, explaining that decreasing the prevalence of seasonal flu will help alleviate medical surges.