

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** State Executives  
AHCA/NCAL Leadership and Members

**FROM:** Janice Zalen, Sr. Director of Special Programs

**SUBJECT:** H1N1 Update No. 13

**DATE:** May 27, 2009

Today, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported 7,927 laboratory confirmed and probable cases of novel H1N1 influenza in 48 states. Eleven deaths have been reported.

CDC added “H1N1 Flu State Health Department Websites” at [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/states.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/states.htm). From there, you can hit any state for individual state information relating to H1N1.

On May 23, CDC updated its interim guidance on the use of facemasks and respirators for decreasing exposure to H1N1 influenza. This interim guidance replaces other CDC guidance on mask and/or respirator use relating to H1N1, but does NOT change guidance on the use of facemasks and respirators for health care settings. The interim guidance provides information on facemask and respirator use for a wider range of settings than was included in previous documents and includes recommendations for those who are at increased risk of severe illness from H1N1. The guidance may be accessed at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/masks.htm>. The interim guidance on the use of facemasks and respirators in health care settings has not changed and may be accessed at [http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidelines\\_infection\\_control.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidelines_infection_control.htm). As we reported last week, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued surveyor guidance relating to H1N1 that includes planning for N95s. The CMS guidance may be accessed at [http://www.cms.hhs.gov/SurveyCertificationGenInfo/downloads/SCLetter09\\_36.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/SurveyCertificationGenInfo/downloads/SCLetter09_36.pdf).

CDC also updated its Guidelines for the Submission of Tissue Specimens for the Pathologic Evaluation of Influenza Virus Infections to refine the sampling recommendations and to provide more detailed shipping instructions. This guidance is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/tissuesubmission.htm>.

On May 22, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced that HHS will direct approximately \$1 billion toward development of a vaccine for novel H1N1 influenza. Should there be a vaccine for H1N1, according to the HHS Pandemic Influenza Plan, certain health care workers are in the first priority tier for receipt of vaccine. These health care workers are defined in the Plan as follows: *Healthcare workers (HCW) with direct patient contact (including acute-care hospitals, nursing homes, skilled nursing facilities, urgent care centers, physician's offices, clinics, home care, blood collection centers, and EMS) and a proportion of persons working in essential healthcare support services needed to maintain healthcare services (e.g. dietary, housekeeping, admissions, blood collection center staff, etc.). Also included are healthcare workers in public health with direct patient contact, including those who may administer vaccine or distribute influenza antiviral medications, and essential public health support staff for these workers.* The HHS Pandemic Influenza Plan is available at <http://www.hhs.gov/pandemicflu/plan/appendixd.html>. States are not required to adhere to the recommendations in the HHS Plan though they are encouraged to follow the recommendations.

Unless there is late-breaking news, this will be the only H1N1 Update by AHCA this week.