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## Milwaukee Health Department Addresses Racial Disparity in H1N1 Hospitalization Rate

*City steps up vaccination efforts as part of National Influenza Vaccine Week*

MILWAUKEE – The City of Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) is announcing plans to provide additional opportunities for H1N1 vaccination this month on the heels of an announcement that City of Milwaukee H1N1 hospitalization rates were 2 to 3 times higher in African Americans and Hispanics than they were for non-Hispanic whites during this past fall.

“Unfortunately this data is not a surprise,” said Bevan K. Baker, City of Milwaukee Commissioner of Health. “While it does not account for the many factors that may lead to increased risk of infection such as lack of access to healthcare, being uninsured or having underlying health conditions, we also know that African American and Hispanic populations especially are less likely to get vaccinated against influenza and that is the number one way to reduce disease transmission in our community.”

The report, released by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, shows that the statewide rate of H1N1 hospitalization during the fall outbreak was 38.7 per 100,000 among African Americans compared to 11.6 among Non-Hispanic whites, a 3.3-fold difference. Similar disparities existed for Native Americans who were 3.0 times more likely to be hospitalized, Hispanics who were 2.7 times more likely to be hospitalized and Asians who were twice as likely when compared to whites.

MHD officials have planned additional H1N1 vaccination opportunities throughout the community in conjunction with National Influenza Vaccination Week, January 10-16<sup>th</sup>. Vaccine will be available at no charge during walk-in clinics as follows:

- Monday, January 11<sup>th</sup> from 3- 6p.m. at Southside Health Center, 1639 S. 23rd St.
- Tuesday, January 12<sup>th</sup> from 1-4p.m. at Southside Health Center. 1639 S. 23<sup>rd</sup> St.
- Wednesday, January 13<sup>th</sup> from 3-6p.m. at Northwest Health Center 7630 W. Mill Road
- Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup> from 8-11a.m. at Northwest Health Center, 7630 W. Mill Road
- Friday, January 15<sup>th</sup> from 8-11a.m. at Keenan Health Center, 3200 N. 36th Street

In coordination with Milwaukee Public Schools three-choice enrollment this month, vaccine will also be distributed at the MPS Administration Building, 5225 W. Vliet Street on January 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.

A clinic consent form is posted on the MHD website at [www.milwaukee.gov/health](http://www.milwaukee.gov/health) and is available in both English and Spanish. The MHD strongly encourages residents to download and complete the form and bring it with them to the clinic to assist in quicker registration processing. Vaccine will be provided as supplies remain available within the designated clinic hours.

In 2009, more than 25,000 doses of vaccine were administered by the City of Milwaukee.

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