



Greater Somerset Public Health Partnership

For More Information:

Stephanie Carey, Health Officer
Montgomery Township Health Department
Phone: 908-359-8211, x245

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H1N1 Vaccination Clinic Planning Underway in Somerset County

Planning for local H1N1 Influenza vaccination clinics by the Greater Somerset Public Health Partnership is now fully underway, with nearly forty H1N1 vaccination clinics being scheduled throughout the greater Somerset County area in November and December alone. Additional dates will be added for January and February, as more vaccine becomes available and if community demand exists.

“Now that we have a clearer picture of actual H1N1 vaccine delivery dates,” said Stephanie Carey, Montgomery Township Health Officer and Chair of the Partnership, “We can finalize plans for our local clinic schedules.” In addition, Ms. Carey adds “Most of our clinics will be held in schools and municipal buildings, and community members can attend any clinic, in any town. They will be held after school hours.” The H1N1 influenza vaccine is free of charge at these clinics. Community members may also receive the vaccine through their healthcare providers.

The World Health Organization declared the novel H1N1 Influenza outbreak a pandemic in June, just two months after cases first appeared. While most of the reported cases have experienced mild illness, there have been deaths associated with the H1N1 virus. The virus appears to most seriously impact children and young adults, ages 6 months – 24 years of age, pregnant women and those with underlying health issues.

H1N1 vaccination clinics are currently targeting only those segments of the population that have the greatest risk of complications due to H1N1 influenza infections. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, these groups include:

- Pregnant Women
- Children ages 6 months – 24 years of age

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H1N1 Vaccination Clinics

- Caregivers of children 6 months of age or younger
- Adults ages 25 – 64, with underlying chronic health conditions, such as diabetes, lung disease, heart conditions and others
- Healthcare providers with direct patient care, including
Emergency Medical Services Personnel

While anyone who wishes to receive the vaccine will be able to receive it in the future, as more vaccine is shipped, this ‘first round’ of clinics is only for those groups identified. Unlike seasonal influenza, older adults do not appear to develop serious outcomes from the H1N1 virus, possibly due to prior exposure, and are therefore not a part of the initial target groups to be vaccinated.

When dates are finalized, numerous venues will be used to publicize the clinics, including local papers, radio, through the schools, and on each health department’s website. This information will also be available on each local health department’s website. Community members can also call the *Greater Somerset H1N1 “Shotline”* at 908-533-9330 for current clinic updates. Lastly, up to the minute information can be followed via Twitter, at <http://twitter.com/Somerset H1N1>.

Vaccinations are being provided in partnership with the Community VNA, located in Somerville, the Visiting Nurse Association of Somerset Hills, located in Basking Ridge, and with support from many school nurses in the county.

The *Greater Somerset Public Health Partnership* is a collaborative effort of local health departments within Somerset County, working to provide cost-effective public health services to the greater Somerset area. The Partnership includes the Bernards Township Health Department, Branchburg Health Department, Bridgewater Health Department, Hillsborough Health Department, Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission, Montgomery Health Department, Somerset County Health Department and the Somerville Health Department. Collectively, these departments serve all of Somerset County, and parts of Middlesex and Morris Counties.

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