

H1N1 flu clinic to be held in Sterling Nov. 14

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

The Northeast Colorado Health Department (NCHD) has scheduled a large walk-in H1N1 vaccination clinic on Saturday, Nov. 14 in Sterling. This public clinic will be held at the department's district headquarters located at 700 Columbine St. and will run from 10 a.m.–3 p.m. or until the vaccine runs out. H1N1 vaccinations from NCHD are free of charge.

While the department expects to have 500-700 doses available, it will be a mixture of the live nasal spray vaccine as well as the inactivated shot vaccine. Although the groups of individuals receiving vaccine has expanded, doses are still limited and they will be given on a first come, first served basis. Those people eligible to receive vaccine now include:

—Pregnant women.

—People who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age.

—All health care and emergency medical services personnel.

—All people from 6 months through 24 years of age.

—Persons aged 25 to 64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza.

Vaccinations will not be given during this large clinic to individuals that do not fall into one of the above categories.

In order to speed up the process of a large walk-in clinic, residents are urged to visit the health department's web site, www.nchd.org, and print out the appropriate H1N1 consent forms listed on the front page. A separate consent form must be filled out for each person receiving a vaccination.

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“Since we have received less vaccine than anticipated, this is the first opportunity we’ve had to open a large clinic,” said John Crosthwait, NCHD’s district public health administrator. “We have plans to hold similar clinics in Morgan and Washington counties later this month, but the availability of vaccine, which changes on a weekly basis, will play a major role in our ability to do so.”

According to Crosthwait, a little over 9,000 doses of the H1N1 vaccine have already been distributed in NCHD’s six-county health district. In addition to public health, many private health care providers and local hospitals have taken active roles in their communities to help get the vaccine to those individuals most at risk for severe illness.

“I think the vaccine situation has proven to be frustrating to a number of our residents, but we are working with our area partners to ensure we’re doing all we can to offer the vaccinations as soon as possible to those most at risk,” said Crosthwait. “For those of you who are not yet eligible to receive a vaccine or have chosen not to receive one, please continue to stay home when you’re ill, wash your hands and cover your coughs.”

For more information about H1N1 clinics and other recent updates visit www.nchd.org.