



News for Immediate Release

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Free Flu Clinics Offered During National Influenza Vaccination Week in Pennsylvania

Harrisburg – Sixty state health centers, many Area Agencies on Aging, and other public and private partners throughout Pennsylvania will be offering free flu clinics Dec. 2-8.

The free clinics complement activities during National Influenza Vaccination Week, a week dedicated to advising people that they can get the flu vaccine throughout the holiday season and into January, not just in the fall.

"It's not too late to get vaccinated, so Pennsylvanians should take advantage of these flu clinics," Acting Secretary of Health Michael Wolf said. "By increasing vaccination rates, we can fight the spread of influenza and help Pennsylvanians stay healthy into the New Year."

So far this year, influenza activity has been sporadic; however, it usually picks up after Thanksgiving and there are indications this is occurring. Now is an excellent time to get the vaccine for those who have not yet received it.

While Pennsylvania had a mild flu season last year, there were more than 19,000 influenza cases reported to the Department of Health the previous year, with 21 percent of those cases involving people age 65 and older.

"Prevention is the key to keeping older Pennsylvanians healthy," Secretary of Aging Brian Duke said. "Through our PrimeTime Health program, many Area Agencies on Aging are able to offer flu shots for older adults in their areas. This partnership helps our older Pennsylvanians to get immunized and stay healthy during the flu season."

Other groups at high risk for developing the flu include young children, pregnant women, anyone with chronic medical conditions and healthcare workers.

Flu season typically runs from October through May, and often peaks between January and March with an average of five to 20 percent of the U.S. population developing influenza each year.

Individuals seeking vaccination from the Department of Health are encouraged to contact their local state health center for clinic hours or call 877-PA-HEALTH. Older Pennsylvanians are encouraged to contact their Area Agency on Aging, listed in the

government section of local telephone directories or by visiting www.aging.state.pa.us.

For more information on seasonal influenza, contact your local health care provider or visit www.health.state.pa.us, where you will also find a list of free flu clinics being offered at state health centers across Pennsylvania.

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