



Town of Falmouth Fire-EMS Department

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INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: Nathan Poore, Town Manager
FROM: Chief Howard Rice, Jr.
DATE: September 9, 2009
RE: Update on EMA planning for potential H1N1 Virus outbreak in Falmouth

The Falmouth EMA group continues to work to plan for a potential outbreak of the H1N1 Virus in Falmouth. The latest news from the Maine CDC forecasts a potential outbreak of the virus combined with the usual fall flu outbreaks. We are working very closely with local and state officials to monitor the most updated information on the spread of the virus and to follow recommendations on possible ways to prevent the spread of the virus.

Falmouth EMA is working with Town Department Heads to develop a plan for the continuation of essential services of the Town of Falmouth should a large amount of employees become absent from work due to illness, and we are creating a plan for mass vaccinations of target populations if they are needed. We are also working very closely with the Falmouth Schools to help plan for two seasonal flu vaccine clinics that have been scheduled for September 16th and 22nd from 5 to 7 pm. The Maine CDC and Maine Department of Education are working to provide all school children the opportunity to receive a seasonal flu shot and an H1N1 virus flu shot. The clinics on the 16th and 22nd will provide the seasonal flu vaccine, and when the H1N1 Virus vaccine is available, Falmouth Schools will set up a second round of clinics. Falmouth schools have already received over 900 requests for these seasonal flu shots as of September 9th.

Attached is the latest update on the H1N1 Virus Plan that was distributed to the Falmouth EMA group on September 9th.

Falmouth EMA Group - H1N1 Update 05 (September 9, 2009)

From Maine CDC Website:

Maine CDC/DHHS Update on Novel Influenza A (H1N1) Virus September 2, 2009

Tracking Updates

On Friday, Aug. 28, US CDC reported 8,843 hospitalizations and 556 deaths nationwide from H1N1. As of Aug. 23, the World Health Organization reported 2,185 deaths from H1N1 and reports of H1N1 from over 200 countries.

Maine has identified 360 cases of H1N1, which include 19 individuals requiring hospitalization and one individual who has died. Of Maine residents with H1N1, 60 percent have been under 25 years of age. The number of cases is only a barometer of community transmission, not of actual case counts, because not all people with infection are tested.

Maine Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report

August 26, 2009

- 360 confirmed and probable cases of H1N1 total to date
 - 206 in Maine residents
 - 14 Maine residents have been hospitalized
 - 154 in out of state residents tested in Maine
 - 5 Out of state residents have been hospitalized in Maine
- 1 death reported to date
- 91% of lab confirmed H1N1 cases in Maine residents and out of state visitors are under the age of 50 (range 0-81 years, mean of 22 years)

Vaccination:

Maine CDC vaccine planning with communities and schools is well underway. There are several areas we are focused on right now:

1. Maine CDC is working with Maine Department of Education (DOE) to assure that all Maine children are offered seasonal (regular) and H1N1 vaccine in local schools. As of Monday August 31st, our toll free H1N1 number (1-888-257-0990) is staffed 9 am – 5 pm with professionals from Maine CDC and DOE to assist schools and partnering health care providers in this effort. We will refer a District Vaccine Coordinator to those schools and/or health care providers who need more direct assistance in this effort.
2. Maine CDC is working with the Regional Resource Centers at Eastern Maine Medical Center, Central Maine Medical Center, and Maine Medical Center, to assure that all health care providers and Emergency Medical Services personnel (EMS) are offered H1N1 vaccine during the first few weeks of its arrival.
3. Maine CDC is working with clinicians who provide health care for pregnant women to assure they have H1N1 vaccine for their patients and themselves as soon as it arrives in Maine.
4. Maine CDC will also be working with residential schools, employers, and health care providers to assure all others in the high-risk groups for H1N1 are offered vaccine.

Governor's Declaration:

Governor John E. Baldacci on September 1, 2009 signed a Proclamation of Civil Emergency Due to a Highly Infectious Agent to allow the State to better respond to the potential dangers of H1N1 flu and to facilitate a statewide vaccination campaign.

Many school districts reported that a concern about potential liability was putting at risk their ability to participate in vaccination clinics. The proclamation protects school districts and other vaccination clinic participants from liability. The proclamation also will provide immunity from tort liability for approved health care workers who administer the flu vaccines. The Maine CDC, DOE, and MEMA will coordinate and facilitate the implementation of school supported vaccine clinics for both the seasonal flu and H1N1.

The press release and the declaration itself can be found at:

<http://www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/index.php?topic=Portal+News&id=78666&v=article-2008>

Falmouth Update:

As a reminder, we have kept this 'event' open from the early summer (May). The organizational chart for the event remains the same at this time. Here is an update on recent actions:

The Incident Commander (Chief Rice):

- Met with Planning Section Chief to review and update the Incident Action Plan.
- Updated Falmouth Emergency Management Information line (699-5241)
- Reviewed Falmouth Emergency Operations Plan
- Obtained information from Town of Falmouth Department Heads on critical functions, lines of succession to begin creating Continuity of Government (COG) plan.

The Planning Section Chief (Asst. Chief Patey):

- Attended Statewide H1N1 Summit on August 20th sponsored by Maine CDC/DHHS, Maine Emergency Management Agency, Maine Department of Education, and Maine EMS.
- Participated in a meeting with Cumberland County Group that included EMA, Fire/EMS, Doctors, Nurses, and Private Healthcare Groups to talk about issues specific to the H1N1 plan for Cumberland County.
- Communicated with School Group (Superintendent and School Nurses) and Fire-EMS Medical Director to review informational release to all incoming students.
- Working with schools for upcoming seasonal flu vaccine clinics.
- Met with School Group (Superintendent) to discuss Continuity of Government planning for the school district.

The Public Information Officer (Asst. Chief Patey):

- Met with Falmouth Forecaster on August 25th to discuss recent Summit and discuss Falmouth continuous planning for a potential outbreak of the H1N1 Virus.

Review of the H1N1 Summit:

On August 20th an H1N1 Summit was held in Augusta at the Civic Center. The program, sponsored by Maine CDC/DHHS, Maine Emergency Management Agency, Maine Department of Education, and Maine EMS, was attended by 1,400 various healthcare providers and administrators. The morning session discussed the global issue of the influenza and how the State of Maine was preparing to reduce the affects on the virus. In the afternoon session attendees met as County groups to discuss issues and ideas specific to Cumberland County.

There is currently a concern that the H1N1 virus will reappear this fall stronger and in larger numbers than experienced this spring. The actual number of doses of vaccine to be distributed to Maine CDC is not currently known. A supply of vaccine sufficient to vaccinate the entire population in Maine will not be available all at once. Therefore, US CDC has made recommendations about the groups that should be considered the highest priority to receive the first available doses of vaccine. They are:

- **Pregnant women**, because they are at higher risk of complications – especially in the second and third trimesters – and can potentially provide protection to infants who cannot be vaccinated;
- **Household members and caregivers for children under 6 months old**, because younger infants are at higher risk of complications and cannot be vaccinated;
- **Health care and emergency medical services personnel**, because infections among health care workers have been reported and this can be a potential source of infection for patients;
- **All people ages 6 months through 24 years of age:**
 - Children ages 6 months to 18 years, because there have been many cases of H1N1 in children and they are in close contact with each other in school and day care settings, which increases the chances of spreading disease;
 - Young adults ages 19 through 24, because there have been many cases of H1N1 in healthy young adults, and they often live, work, and study in close proximity, and they are a frequently mobile population;
- **People ages 25 through 64 who have health conditions** associated with a higher risk of medical complications from the flu, including those with asthma, COPD, diabetes, chronic cardiovascular disease, and people with compromised immune systems.

At this time the state and county resources are working to develop a plan to provide for the vaccinations.

Aside from the vaccination issue all communities need to ensure that they have a plan in place for the continuity of government. If the virus hits hard enough we could have a patrol officer operating as the Police Chief or a Clerk operating as the Finance Manager.

Revised updates have been provided to the schools for dealing with sick children and staff. The Falmouth School Nurses are reviewing and discussing the plans at this time.

Overall these issues are very fluid and frequent updates are expected from the State.

Next Steps:

- Falmouth School Nurses providing seasonal flu vaccine clinics on September 16th and 22nd from 5 to 7 pm. A second planning meeting for the clinics is scheduled for September 10th.
- Falmouth Fire-EMS to create staffing plan for ambulance and crew for potential stand-by at seasonal flu vaccine clinics.
- Continue to monitor information released from Maine CDC and Maine EMA.
- Continue to create Continuity of Government Plan for Town of Falmouth.
- Continue to investigate possible Citizen Notification System for release of information or warnings to the public.
- Create plan for mass inoculations in Falmouth if needed.
- Continue to work with Falmouth Schools to monitor and share information.
- Provide update to Falmouth Town Council on September 14th.
- Create a prevention campaign to promote good hygiene to prevent flu spread.
- Monitor information on the release of the H1N1 Virus vaccine.

Chief Howard Rice, Jr., EMA Director / Incident Commander