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October 13, 2009

Healthcare Provider  
Address  
City, CA Zip Code

Dear Healthcare Provider:

***Please ignore the earlier version of this letter that you may have received as it contained a non-working link to the VAERS website.*** As you are no doubt aware, a national vaccination program against Pandemic H1N1 influenza will begin over the next few weeks. Pandemic H1N1 vaccine will be available to Los Angeles County providers who have ordered the vaccine on the CalPanFlu website ([www.CalPanFlu.org](http://www.CalPanFlu.org)).

As a healthcare provider providing services in Los Angeles County, you can help monitor the safety of vaccines by promptly and accurately reporting any clinically significant adverse events that occur following vaccination to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). Clinically significant adverse events are those events that are of concern to you or your vaccinated patients or their caregivers. Please report clinically significant adverse events after vaccination, whether or not you administered the vaccine and even if you are not sure if the vaccine caused the adverse event.

VAERS is a US vaccine safety surveillance system co-managed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). VAERS is the front-line monitoring system for collecting and analyzing voluntary reports of adverse events following vaccination. CDC and the FDA analyze VAERS reports to identify potential vaccine safety concerns that may need further study or public health action.

There are three ways to report to VAERS:

- 1) Submit online via a secure website at <https://vaers.hhs.gov/esub/index>;
- 2) Fax a completed VAERS form to (877) 721-0366, or
- 3) Mail a completed VAERS form to VAERS, P.O. Box 1100, Rockville, MD 20849-1100.

The VAERS form can be obtained either by downloading from the website at <https://vaers.hhs.gov/esub/index>, by sending an email to [info@vaers.org](mailto:info@vaers.org), by calling toll-free (800) 822-7967, or by sending a faxed request to (877) 721-0366.

For additional information on VAERS or vaccine safety, visit the VAERS website at [www.vaers.hhs.gov](http://www.vaers.hhs.gov) or call (800) 822-7967.

When submitting a report to VAERS, please include as much information requested on the form as possible to assist the VAERS' staff with the analysis and follow-up of the adverse event. For example, please include information about vaccination location, date, vaccine type, lot number and

dose. The form also includes a space to provide contact information for the person reporting the adverse event.

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health is particularly interested in serious clinically significant events which occur after vaccination of persons residing in the County and request that you fax a copy of your VAERS report to our Department's Immunization Program at (213) 351-2782. We have staff that will be available to assist you in addressing questions or concerns you might have regarding adverse events occurring after vaccination with the Pandemic H1N1 vaccine. You can reach program staff by calling 1-866-756-1513 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on weekdays. If you need information and cannot wait until normal business hours, please contact the County Operator at (213) 974-1234 and request to speak with the Public Health Administrative Officer of the Day.

Lastly, a very important public health initiative has been implemented as part of post-licensure vaccine safety monitoring of the Pandemic H1N1 vaccine. It is important for us to identify every case of Guillain-Barre' syndrome (GBS) that occurs in Los Angeles County (regardless of vaccination status), starting on October 1. Reporting of GBS has been made a legally reportable disease in this County, and we request your assistance in this initiative. Please refer to the accompanying materials which explain how to report GBS cases to our Department.

Thank you in advance for participation in these important vaccine safety monitoring programs.

Together we can ensure that vaccination continues to be as safe as possible.

Sincerely,



Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H.  
Director and Health Officer

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Enclosures