

March 2, 2010

Dear Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_:

The Maine Center for Disease Control (Maine CDC), the U.S. Center for Disease Control (US CDC), and the Maine Department of Education are working together to conduct an assessment of the direct and indirect effects of the school-based 2009 pandemic influenza A (H1N1) vaccination program in Maine. Because Maine chose school-based vaccination as its main strategy for pandemic vaccine distribution and administration, we have an excellent opportunity to assess the effects of vaccinating school-aged children.

We are seeking your assistance for this evaluation. We would like to invite select public and private elementary and middle schools in four counties (Androscoggin, Cumberland, Penobscot, and York), including your schools, to participate in this assessment. A list of selected schools can be found at <http://www.maine.gov/education/h1n1/schoolvacclinics/maineschool.pdf>. Also, please note that at a later date, we will invite all public and private elementary and middle schools in these four counties to participate.

For the purposes of this evaluation, we are committed to complying with all Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations and are **not** requesting any personal identifiers or information, which might be used to track back to an individual student or staff. We will be using state student IDs only, which are not considered a personal identifier. Importantly, all information collected during this evaluation will not be used outside of the scope of this project.

We are furthermore committed to conducting this evaluation with minimal disruption to your staff and students. In this effort, we have organized the data collection process so that all absentee records can be easily gathered at the School Administrative Unit (SAU) level by assigned SAU information technology (IT) personnel using the instructions listed below. The vaccination data will be collected at each school; and in order to assist in this process and cause minimal disruption we will be providing monetary reimbursement, as outlined below, to each of the selected schools.

Supporting materials and instructions for the following may be found at the web link below:  
<http://www.maine.gov/education/h1n1/schoolvacclinics/midcourseeval.html>

#### Compensation

We anticipate providing assistance for funding and compensating either existing staff, such as school nurses, to complete the data-gathering outside of normal working hours or for the hiring of additional staff (e.g., substitute teachers) to assist with the compiling of vaccine records, provided they are familiar with SAU and Department of Education rules and regulations.

Funding for this program will be reimbursed directly to each school by the Maine CDC, using a similar reimbursement mechanism as used during the initial H1N1 vaccine campaign. Each school will be compensated according to the number of students enrolled in that school (grades K-8 only). This compensation will be dependent upon the complete and timely return of the requested data by **March 16, 2010**.

#### Next Steps

The next step, if you agree to participate, is to respond to Nancy Dube, Department of Education School Nurse Consultant, at [nancy.dube@maine.gov](mailto:nancy.dube@maine.gov). We also ask that you send this letter, as soon as possible, including the web linked instructions, to your school principals, designated SAU IT personnel, and school nurses. Also, please know that if you agree to participate, we will contact individual school principals independently with a description of the program. Finally, please feel free to discuss and share our instructions for this program with your staff as appropriate.

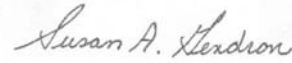
If you have questions, please contact Nancy Dube, Department of Education School Nurse Consultant by phone at 624-6688 or via e-mail at [nancy.dube@maine.gov](mailto:nancy.dube@maine.gov) or you may contact Sam Graitcer, at the US CDC via e-mail at [sgraitcer@cdc.gov](mailto:sgraitcer@cdc.gov) .

We would like to thank you and your staff in advance for your dedication to the children of Maine and assistance in this evaluation. It is our hope that Maine's success can be a model for the rest of the country.

Sincerely,



Dora Anne Mills, MD, MPH  
State Health Officer  
Director, Maine CDC  
Maine Department of Health  
and Human Services



Susan A. Gendron  
Commissioner  
Maine Department  
of Education

cc: School Principals, School Nurses, and IT Personnel