

## FORT HALL INDIAN RESERVATION

### 2009 H1N1 Influenza Epidemic and Vaccine

Nationally, the H1N1 Vaccine is being supplied by the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). Vaccine is being shipped from the SNS each week to different locations in Idaho, and will continue to be shipped in the foreseeable future. Vaccinations should be available throughout the entire flu season.

As of 10/16/09, the Fort Hall Indian Reservation Health Care System has not received a shipment of vaccines yet. Once a full shipment is received the Fort Hall vaccination plan will be implemented. Individuals who do not want to wait and desire vaccination immediately, may contact the Southeastern Health District's Flu & H1N1 hotline, 233-9080 option 6, to learn where vaccines are currently available and on what days and times. Information is also available on the web at: <http://www.sdhdidaho.org/>

Pregnant women can receive a vaccination at their OB/GYN in town. Additionally, there are PODs (Point of Dispensing) planned throughout Southeastern Idaho to provide vaccinations, and people can learn where to go by calling the above number or going on the web (address above.)

When vaccinations are received by Fort Hall, priority will be given to individuals based on the CDC recommendations, including pregnant women, and individuals from six months to 24 years of age. Again, a full listing is found on the CDC website. The vaccine will be issued to Fort Hall from the Southeast District Health Department (SDHD) who receives the shipment from the SNS. The vaccination plan for Fort Hall includes setting up "mini-POD's" at the reservation schools. No date is available for these, since availability of vaccines is dependent upon supplies being released from the SNS and dispersed by the SDHD.

The Reservation vaccination efforts are headed by Mel Timbana, Emergency Response Training Specialist who is working with a response team with representation from the Tribal Health and Human Services, the Indian Health Services, the Sho-Ban School the Fort Hall Police Department and Emergency Medical Services. The H1N1 response team is ready to implement the vaccination plan as soon as a sufficient quality of vaccine is made available. The date and time of dispensing will be announced at each school and is tentatively scheduled on a Thursday morning. Again the specific date is dependent upon the arrival of sufficient vaccine quantities. Parents and guardians must provide a written consent for children under 18 to receive their vaccination and parents or guardians must accompany children who are under 13 years of age.

Currently about 50% of patients being seen in the Clinic are here for upper respiratory illness symptoms most of which are not serious. All people should be aware that this flu illness can usually be managed at home. Those with other disease states that would put them at risk of severe complications should call the clinic for information as needed. All people entering the clinic with upper respiratory symptoms will be required to wear a mask throughout their duration in the clinic. Until such time as vaccines are made available it is important for people to realize some simple steps can prevent infection with influenza (frequent hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, etc) and even some social distancing

(maintaining some distance between one's self and other) until this wave of influenza abates or vaccination arrives.