



## **HRSA Guidance on Preparations for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase of the Novel H1N1 Influenza Pandemic (Fall 2009 – Winter 2010 Flu Season)**

This guidance was issued on **8/14/2009**. Check back at [www.hrsa.gov/h1n1](http://www.hrsa.gov/h1n1) for more recent updates.

### Background

This guidance is intended primarily for HRSA-funded direct service grantees, their subgrantees, and contractors although other HRSA grantees may also find the information useful. Grantees with subgrantees may wish to share this guidance with their subgrantees/contractors. In addition to HRSA grantees, this guidance may also be of interest to eligible 340B entities (see [www.hrsa.gov/opa/introduction.htm](http://www.hrsa.gov/opa/introduction.htm)) and our cooperative agreement partners to the extent that the information in this guidance may apply to them.

The purpose of this guidance is to convey information to HRSA grantees that they can use to help plan and prepare for the coming 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase Novel H1N1 pandemic during the Fall 2009 – Winter 2010 flu season. HRSA encourages its grantees to review their existing Emergency Preparedness and Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plans and to incorporate pandemic influenza preparation measures, such as those suggested below, into those plans as appropriate and necessary.

On June 11, 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) signaled that a global pandemic of Novel H1N1 influenza A was underway by raising the worldwide pandemic alert level to Phase 6, its highest level. This action reflected the increasing geographic spread of new H1N1 infections to new countries and regions, not an increasing severity of illness caused by the virus. At the time, more than 70 countries had reported cases of Novel H1N1 Influenza infections during that 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the pandemic.

Since the WHO declaration of a pandemic, the Novel H1N1 virus has continued to spread, with the number of countries reporting cases of Novel H1N1 infections nearly doubling. The Southern Hemisphere's annual flu season has begun and countries there are reporting that the new H1N1 virus is spreading and causing illness along with the regular seasonal influenza viruses. In the United States, significant Novel H1N1 illness has continued into the summer, with localized and sometimes intense outbreaks occurring. The United States continues to report the largest number of Novel H1N1 cases of any country worldwide. However, most people who have become ill from confirmed H1N1 infection have recovered without requiring medical treatment. (See [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu)).

While last spring's emergence of the Novel H1N1 influenza virus was less serious than originally anticipated, the possibility in the fall of mutation, antiviral resistance, or increased virulence makes it necessary for grantees to plan ahead and implement prudent preparedness measures, especially for populations at highest risk.

In some instances this guidance links to websites that are not government-owned or government-sponsored if these websites provide government information and/or services in a way that is not available on an official government website and the additional information is consistent with the

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This guidance relies on information from a wide variety of sources. It is the best information available to HRSA at the time this guidance is released. However, H1N1 preparedness is expected to continue evolving as we get closer to the fall flu season and more information becomes available. HRSA will post any major changes to this guidance to its website at [www.hrsa.gov/h1n1](http://www.hrsa.gov/h1n1).

The guidance is organized into thematic groups however the numbering of the guidance sections is continuous for ease of reference.

## **HRSA H1N1 GUIDANCE**

### **Planning**

1. HRSA encourages its grantees to plan for the coming flu season in coordination with State and local public health authorities.
2. HRSA encourages its grantees to work with their States to determine how they might partner in preparedness and response efforts to promote surge capacity and assist with keeping less severely ill persons from overtaxing emergency departments. States, territories, and certain large metropolitan areas recently received H1N1 preparedness funding from the Federal government from two sources: \$90 million in U.S Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) grants and the \$260 million in Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Public Health Emergency Response (PHER) Grants. See [www.hhs.gov/news/press/2009pres/07/20090710a.html](http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2009pres/07/20090710a.html). In the past, some of these States, territories, and cities have made some of the funding from these mechanisms available to HRSA funded programs including entities with HRSA cooperative agreements. HRSA funded entities should work with their public health departments to determine the availability of any H1N1 preparedness funding from these sources.
3. HRSA encourages grantees to regularly review resources available at [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov), the One-Stop Access to U.S. Government information on Novel H1N1, avian, and pandemic influenza viruses. More H1N1-specific information is available at [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu) or en Español at [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/espanol/](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/espanol/).
  - a. To learn about other updates made to the CDC H1N1 Flu Website in the past 24 hours, please check the "What's New" page at [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/whatsnew.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/whatsnew.htm).
  - b. Checking for updates at the CDC "What's New" page allows you to get up-to-the-minute information at your convenience with less repetition and reduces the volume of incoming messaging so you can focus efforts on response to the outbreak.
  - c. Grantees should also consider signing up through [www.emergency.cdc.gov/rss/](http://www.emergency.cdc.gov/rss/) for CDC Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds to receive automatic updates from the CDC's Clinician Outreach Communications Activity (COCA) directly on the desktop or through an Internet browser or e-mail.
  - d. Grantees should be monitoring health alert network (HAN) messaging from their State or local health department via [www2a.cdc.gov/han/Index.asp](http://www2a.cdc.gov/han/Index.asp).
4. HRSA encourages its grantees to review their State's pandemic flu plan which can be found at [www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/states/stateplans.html](http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/states/stateplans.html).

### **Acquiring Countermeasures**

5. HRSA suggests to its grantees that they have or arrange to receive or acquire, through public or private sources, sufficient quantities of Novel H1N1 countermeasures (antivirals, N95 disposable respirators, surgical masks, eye protection, gowns, hand sanitizer, etc.) as may be needed consistent with evolving Federal recommendations for patient care staff, office staff,

prophylactic use, or for symptomatic patients exhibiting influenza-like illness (ILI) who may seek care at grantee sites.

- a. Grantees should closely monitor evolving Federal plans to provide allocations of Novel H1N1 countermeasures to States for distribution to public health providers. Countermeasures (other than vaccine) should also be commercially available. See Item 8 below for details on vaccine availability. Providers should review the following websites, which can assist in countermeasures planning: [www.flu.gov/vaccine/antiviral\\_employers.html](http://www.flu.gov/vaccine/antiviral_employers.html) and [www.pandemictoolkit.com/tamiflu-supplyordering/tamiflu-store.aspx](http://www.pandemictoolkit.com/tamiflu-supplyordering/tamiflu-store.aspx).
  - b. HRSA grantees should coordinate with their State Department of Health and/or their State's Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Coordinator to be sure they are included in the State's plan for distribution of Novel H1N1 countermeasures from State cache's and Federal SNS allocations to States.
6. HRSA suggests that in acquiring N95 disposable respirators, grantees should take into account the need for individualized medical clearance and fit testing for staff and be aware of CDC's "Interim Recommendations for Facemask and Respirator Use to Reduce Novel Influenza (H1N1) Virus Transmission". See [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/masks.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/masks.htm) and <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/respiratoryprotection/standards.html>.
  7. Under certain circumstances, HRSA grantees participating in the 340B Drug Pricing Program may purchase antivirals at reduced cost [www.hrsa.gov/opa/introduction.htm](http://www.hrsa.gov/opa/introduction.htm).
  8. Current planning assumptions are that Novel H1N1 vaccine will be purchased by the U.S. Government and made available to vaccinators at no cost. Grantees should monitor the situation closely in case there are any adjustments to this planning assumption. The current plan is for syringes, needles, sharps containers and alcohol swabs to also be provided free of charge. Vaccine will be allocated across States, proportionally by population. State health departments (and a few separately funded large city health departments) will direct their allocation to local health departments and other vaccination partners [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/statelocal/ga.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/statelocal/ga.htm). A number of States have already established registries for providers to request H1N1 vaccine allocations and HRSA grantees are encouraged to work closely with their States to make their needs known and register with their State public health authorities to receive H1N1 vaccine. Additional information can be found at: [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/provider/preparing.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/provider/preparing.htm).

Although providers will receive the vaccine free of charge, reimbursement for administration of the H1N1 vaccine is currently being worked on by health care financing authorities. Since most HRSA grantees have diversified funding streams, they will need to consider the policies of each payor or grantor. For Medicare patients seen at Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) have traditionally paid for 100% of the cost of the influenza vaccine and its administration once a year. The possibility of two or possibly three influenza vaccinations this year (1 seasonal trivalent and 2 doses of H1N1 monovalent that are currently planned) raises reimbursement questions that have yet to be answered. States are expected to pay their established rates for vaccines provided to Medicaid patients. Private insurers have expressed their intention to pay for H1N1 vaccination of their covered individuals. For additional information see the America's Health Insurance Plans' (AHIP) response available at [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/provider/preparing.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/provider/preparing.htm). Finally, since vaccine for uninsured patients seen by HRSA grantees is expected to come from

the Federal government at no cost via State public health authorities, administration of H1N1 vaccine to a grantee's existing uninsured patients is expected to be covered under the existing grant award. Reimbursement for administration of H1N1 vaccine to any new uninsured surge patients a grantee may see has yet to be determined but grantees are encouraged to work with public health authorities to see if funding may be available to address surge needs.

9. HRSA grantees should be aware of recommendations made by the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) on July 29, 2009, that identify high-priority populations to target for vaccination, at least initially, when vaccine availability may be limited. See [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm). These recommendations are for grantee's information as they have not yet been adopted formally by the CDC through their publication in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR). Grantees may want to check the MMWR over the next few weeks at [http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/mmwr\\_rr.html](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/mmwr_rr.html) for the recommendations CDC adopts on prioritization of Novel H1N1 vaccines. HRSA will also revise its guidance with new information as it become available.
10. Providers participating in Novel H1N1 vaccination will be expected to administer vaccine in accordance with national recommendations for use of the vaccine, especially early in the flu season when the availability of Novel H1N1 vaccine may be limited. Grantees may want to consider any necessary updates to the recordkeeping systems that would enable them to assess the uptake of Novel H1N1 vaccine among their patient population and record any adverse events detected that may be potentially attributable to the new vaccine [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/provider/preparing.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/provider/preparing.htm).
11. HRSA grantees should plan to make available seasonal flu vaccination to its staff and patients as early as possible in order to reduce the incidence of seasonal influenza, free up resources for Novel H1N1 vaccination when that vaccine becomes available, and make the monitoring and resolution between adverse events of seasonal influenza vaccine and Novel H1N1 vaccine easier. Additional information on this year's seasonal influenza vaccine can be found at: [www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm172772.htm](http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm172772.htm). Some strategies for improving seasonal influenza vaccination rates in health care personnel can be found at [www.jointcommission.org/PatientSafety/InfectionControl/flu\\_monograph.htm](http://www.jointcommission.org/PatientSafety/InfectionControl/flu_monograph.htm).
12. HRSA grantees should plan to make Novel H1N1 vaccination available to its workforce as soon as it is available since healthcare workers are at high risk of contracting Novel H1N1 influenza from infected patients and because infected healthcare workers can be a potential source of infection for vulnerable patients. Under current plans, health care workers and emergency medical responders will be among the first to receive the Novel H1N1 flu vaccine since they will most likely be among the first to encounter the Novel H1N1 virus. In addition, early vaccination of healthcare workers can reduce absenteeism in the health care worker population and help maintain healthcare system capacity [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/acip.htm). Nonetheless, since vaccination is voluntary, grantees may have to consider, and plan for, some level of absenteeism among its workforce should illness result from healthcare workers or their close contacts contracting the Novel H1N1 virus.
13. HRSA grantees should strongly encourage health care workers to receive the Novel H1N1 vaccination. Grantees should employ strategies to increase the rates of vaccination for their health care personnel such as waiving administration fees for health care personnel, providing educational materials (such as Vaccine Information Statements; see Item #16), sending

reminder messages, holding informational staff meetings, monitoring employee participation in the vaccination initiative, and employing declination forms such as the one at [www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4068.pdf](http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4068.pdf). To the extent they are able, HRSA grantees are encouraged to become integrated into their local response plans and participate in local planning meetings and preparedness exercises. A comprehensive community mitigation plan that can be implemented while the Novel H1N1 vaccine is being developed can be found at [www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/community/commitigation.html#app4](http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/community/commitigation.html#app4).

### **Collaborations – Working with Others**

14. State Primary Care Associations (PCAs) should work with State authorities on behalf of health centers in their States, including State Health Departments, Primary Care Offices (PCOs) within State Health Departments, State Emergency Management Agencies (EMAs) and State SNS Coordinators to ensure that health centers and primary care grantees are integrated into State and local plans to the extent appropriate and that their capabilities and potential roles in community response are understood by the greater public health and healthcare community.
15. To the extent that they have the capacity and as appropriate, HRSA grantees should explore partnerships with local hospitals that would allow them to contribute to local surge capacity by either a) agreeing to see overflow patients, b) making staff available to augment mass vaccination efforts, or c) agreeing to serve as a Point of Distribution (POD). For additional information please see [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/statelocal/settingupclinics.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/statelocal/settingupclinics.htm). Examples of promising practices are available at: [www.cidrapractices.org/practices/article.do?page=home](http://www.cidrapractices.org/practices/article.do?page=home) and [www.cidrapractices.org/files/343/343\\_toolkit.pdf](http://www.cidrapractices.org/files/343/343_toolkit.pdf).
16. HRSA grantees providing vaccination should be sure to provide a Novel H1N1 Vaccination Information Statement (VIS) to patients. Vaccine Information Statements (VISs) are information sheets produced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that can be found at: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/default.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/default.htm). VISs explain both the benefits and risks of a vaccine to vaccine recipients, their parents, or their legal representatives. Federal law requires that VISs be provided before each dose whenever certain vaccinations are given. VISs also contain information on vaccine injury compensation for anyone who has a serious reaction to a vaccine. VISs are also available in a variety of languages from [www.immunize.org/vis](http://www.immunize.org/vis). Vaccine administration should not be delayed if VISs are not yet available [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/vis-misconception.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/vis-misconception.htm).
17. HRSA encourages grantees with mobile populations, such as migrant farm workers and the homeless, to utilize the Health Network program [www.migrantclinician.org/clinical\\_topics/h1n1-fluswine-flu.html](http://www.migrantclinician.org/clinical_topics/h1n1-fluswine-flu.html) to assist with bridge case management and patient navigation.
18. Since Novel H1N1 vaccine will not be available before the start of the school year, HRSA grantees operating school-based health centers are encouraged to advocate within their schools for early student and parent/caregiver education regarding the Novel H1N1 virus (see [www.flu.gov/plan/school/toolkit.html](http://www.flu.gov/plan/school/toolkit.html)), community mitigation strategies, good hygiene and cough etiquette, and when to stay home in accordance with CDC guidance [www.flu.gov/plan/school/schoolguidance.html](http://www.flu.gov/plan/school/schoolguidance.html). In addition, HRSA grantees without school-based sites should consider outreach and coordination with local schools, pre-schools, and headstart programs in their community to potentially offer vaccinations, especially to

uninsured and underserved children.

19. HRSA encourages clinical service delivery grantees working with populations in nursing homes and other residential care facilities to address their unique service delivery issues. Patients in residential care facilities may have a higher risk for complications. Grantee staff and facility staff should follow the CDC-developed interim infection control guidance for healthcare facilities found at [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidelines\\_infection\\_control.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidelines_infection_control.htm) (note: there is an underscore between words “guidelines”, “infection” and “control” in the web address, as in “guidelines\_infection\_control” that may not be apparent on screen due to the underlining of the URL).
20. HRSA grantees without their own home health care capability should consider engaging with the home health care community to manage appropriate cases at home, if that is prudent, rather than in the outpatient setting.

### **Workforce Considerations**

21. HRSA grantees should encourage their personnel to adopt family preparedness plans that can protect family members, reduce absenteeism, and ensure greater availability of workforce during a pandemic. Discussing the upcoming flu season at home can help encourage communication, reduce anxiety, foster the importance of good hygiene and cough etiquette, and promote early vaccination for both seasonal and Novel H1N1 influenza. The following resources may be helpful:  
[www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/pdf/guide.pdf](http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/pdf/guide.pdf)  
[www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance\\_homecare.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance_homecare.htm)  
[www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/pdf/individuals.pdf](http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/pdf/individuals.pdf)  
[www.ready.gov/america/makeaplan/index.html](http://www.ready.gov/america/makeaplan/index.html)
22. HRSA grantees should develop a pandemic influenza plan and exercise their plan at least annually, preferably before the coming flu season. See [www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/medical.html](http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/medical.html) and [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/10steps.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/10steps.htm).
23. An important component of a grantee’s pandemic influenza plan is workplace planning. Information on workplace planning can be found at [www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/business/](http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/business/) and [www.pandemictoolkit.com/downloads/Guideln\\_OSHA3327pandemic.pdf](http://www.pandemictoolkit.com/downloads/Guideln_OSHA3327pandemic.pdf).
24. National organizations representing HRSA grantees, if not already COCA partners, should consider signing up for the CDC’s Clinician Outreach Communications Activity (COCA) and sharing information with their members. [emergency.cdc.gov/coca/index.asp](http://emergency.cdc.gov/coca/index.asp).
25. HRSA grantees should have their Medical Director and clinical staff monitor the CDC guidance on pandemic influenza at [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance). Although dentists do not routinely administer vaccines, HRSA grantees that provide oral health services should be sure that their dental providers are familiar with the information provided in the CDC Division of Oral Health’s “Prevention of Swine Influenza A (H1N1) in the Dental Healthcare Setting” [www.cdc.gov/oralHealth/InfectionControl/pdf/swineflu.doc](http://www.cdc.gov/oralHealth/InfectionControl/pdf/swineflu.doc). Grantees should have their Medical Director and clinical staff participate in COCA outreach opportunities to stay up to date with evolving guidance. Questions on H1N1-related clinical issues may be sent to [coca@cdc.gov](mailto:coca@cdc.gov).

26. HRSA grantees should ensure that their clinical staff members are familiar with CDC's latest case definitions, infection control practices in the healthcare setting, and antiviral recommendations. These documents are available at [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/).
27. During the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the H1N1 pandemic, rapid test kits were used to differentiate between Novel H1N1 influenza and seasonal influenza. As the clinical affects of the Novel H1N1 virus became more apparent, the need for rapid test kits in the outpatient setting diminished. HRSA grantees should consider the possibility, that if the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the Novel H1N1 pandemic is more sever that what has been experienced thus far, the need for rapid test kits to differentiate between Novel H1N1 influenza and seasonal influenza could return. Grantees should monitor CDC guidance regarding the need for rapid test kits in the outpatient setting and may want to identify a private or public supply chain for rapid test kits in case should they become necessary. For more information see [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/rapid\\_testing.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/rapid_testing.htm) (note: The URL has an underscore between words "rapid" and "testing" in the web address, as in "rapid\_testing" that may not be apparent on screen due to the underlining of the URL).

### **Communications Strategies**

28. As HRSA grantees plan ahead and implement prudent preparedness measures they should remain vigilant in ensuring civil rights compliance by sharing important information regarding the Novel H1N1 pandemic in prevailing languages other than English, by ensuring that no harassment or discrimination is directed toward those who may have contracted the virus or come from areas where the Novel H1N1 virus is more prevalent, and by providing access to information and health services to people with disabilities. The following websites may help in these efforts:  
[www.hhs.gov/ocr](http://www.hhs.gov/ocr)  
[www.lep.gov](http://www.lep.gov)  
[www.hrsa.gov/healthliteracy/training.htm](http://www.hrsa.gov/healthliteracy/training.htm)
29. HRSA grantees should consider a communications strategy aimed at their patient population and staff including messaging, signage, handouts, and public service announcements (PSAs) to educate about pandemic influenza symptoms and precautions, and encourage reporting of appropriate symptoms to clinic staff, frequent hand washing, and good hygiene. See [www.pandemicflu.gov/news/rcommunication.html](http://www.pandemicflu.gov/news/rcommunication.html). Signage in multiple languages is available at: [www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/covercough.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/covercough.htm).  
Patient education materials are also available:
  - a. in English at: [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/qa.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/qa.htm) and
  - b. in Spanish at: [www.cdc.gov/swineflu/espanol/influenza\\_porcina\\_usted.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/espanol/influenza_porcina_usted.htm) (note: there are underscores between words "influenza" and "porcina" and "usted" in the web address, as in "influenza\_porcina\_usted" that may not be apparent on screen due to the underlining of the URL). Additional H1N1 Influenza Resources in Other Languages are available at:  
[www.omhrc.gov/templates/content.aspx?vl=2&lvlid=192&ID=7809](http://www.omhrc.gov/templates/content.aspx?vl=2&lvlid=192&ID=7809).
30. HRSA grantees should consider adoption of waiting room policies to minimize the chance of Novel H1N1 or other respiratory virus transmission between virus-infected patients and non-infected patients, particularly since people with chronic conditions, pregnant women, and children, many of whom are seen by health centers, are particularly vulnerable to

complications of the H1N1 virus. These policies may also apply to other grantee areas such as classrooms, reception areas, and meeting spaces. See [www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/resphygiene.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/resphygiene.htm) and [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/masks.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/masks.htm).

31. HRSA grantees should consider implementing or expanding any telephone triage capability they may have to reduce the number of patients reporting to their service sites unnecessarily and thus reduce the potential for transmission of active H1N1 infection. Information from the CDC on managing calls and calls centers can be found at [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/callcenters.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/callcenters.htm). Information from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), can be found at [www.ahrq.gov/prep/callcenters](http://www.ahrq.gov/prep/callcenters). An example of a telephone triage protocol can be found at: [www.aafp.org/online/en/home/publications/journals/afp/preprint/influenza-telephone-triage.html](http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/publications/journals/afp/preprint/influenza-telephone-triage.html). To the extent possible, HRSA grantees utilizing telephone triage capability may want to follow up with patients with whom they only had telephone contact in order to inquire about signs of worsening which may require in-person evaluation. On-going experience has demonstrated that there are observed benefits to early recognition and treatment of patients and that a follow-up regime can help identify patients whose condition may be rapidly deteriorating.
32. Poison control centers should prepare for an influx of H1N1 questions and work with public health authorities in the areas they serve to prepare information sheets that may allow them to appropriately field H1N1 questions. Scripts for call centers are under development by Federal authorities to help triage patients and reduce surge as a result of suspected H1N1 infection at emergency departments. Poison control centers should be on the look-out for these scripts once they are developed.
33. HRSA grantees should maintain vigilance since the second phase of a pandemic can often be more severe, yet strive to reduce unwarranted concern through education and preparation.

## **Reporting**

34. HRSA grantees with lab capability should continue to report required information to local and State authorities through established reporting channels. As with the initial Novel 2009 H1N1 outbreak, the required frequency and detail of reporting may change over time as the severity and epidemiology of the second phase (and subsequent phases) of the pandemic become apparent. Grantees may wish to contact their local health department to confirm testing protocols and reporting procedures provided at [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/specimencollection.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/specimencollection.htm).
35. HRSA grantees should report any adverse events following immunization (AEFI) with H1N1 by filing a Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) form through the VAERS web site at [www.vaers.hhs.gov](http://www.vaers.hhs.gov) or by calling 1-800-822-7967.
36. HRSA grantees should be aware of the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act which provides important liability protections for both the manufacture and the administration of covered countermeasures, such as the Novel H1N1 vaccine currently under development. Liability protections were put in place to ensure that an adequate supply of countermeasures was produced and made available in the US by vaccine manufacturers. The PREP Act also provides a mechanism to compensate eligible individuals for covered injuries from a covered countermeasure. For an overview of these protections, see

<http://www.hhs.gov/disasters/emergency/manmadedisasters/bioterrorism/medication-vaccine-qa.html>.

- a. The PREP Act authorizes the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (“Secretary”) to issue PREP Act declarations that provide immunity from tort liability (except in cases of willful misconduct) for the development, manufacture, testing, distribution, administration, and use of such countermeasures to certain diseases, threats and conditions. The Secretarial PREP Act declaration specifies the categories of health threats or conditions for which the specific countermeasures are recommended, the period during which liability protections are in effect, the population(s) of individuals protected, and the geographic areas for which the protections are in effect.
- b. A PREP Act declaration covering pandemic countermeasures was originally issued by the Secretary on October 10, 2008 (when avian influenza was the greatest concern) and subsequently amended on April 26, 2009, in order to clarify that the Original Declaration also applies to Novel H1N1 influenza (as well as other influenza strains which originate from animals and which have pandemic potential). See [www.hhs.gov/disasters/discussion/planners/prepact/index.html](http://www.hhs.gov/disasters/discussion/planners/prepact/index.html).
- c. The PREP Act also authorizes creation of a Countermeasures Injury Compensation Fund from which to compensate eligible individuals for covered injuries from a covered countermeasure. These provisions were put in place to encourage broad use of countermeasures by the population at large during a pandemic. The authority to operate the Countermeasures Injury Compensation Program (CICP) was delegated by the Secretary of HHS to the Administrator of HRSA. Information regarding the Countermeasures Injury Compensation Program (CICP) can be accessed directly via [www.hrsa.gov/countermeasurescomp](http://www.hrsa.gov/countermeasurescomp). Vaccine Information Statements (VIS) distributed to recipients at the time of vaccination provide information on applicable vaccine injury compensation programs [www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation](http://www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation) and on how to report adverse events [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/default.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/default.htm).