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Contact: Jennifer Dunlap

Phone: 317-233-7315

Email: jdunlap@isdh.in.gov

State Health Commissioner Confirms Fifth H1N1 Flu-Related Death

INDIANAPOLIS---State Health Commissioner Judy Monroe, M.D., today reported the fifth H1N1 flu-related death in Indiana. This resident of St. Joseph County was previously reported to be suspected to have died from flu-related complications.

"It grieves me to announce we've had our fifth death in the state of Indiana caused by the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus, and my heart goes out to the family," said Dr. Monroe.

"Any influenza can be serious, but it is important for the public to know that in most cases, the H1N1 flu is causing only mild disease," said Dr. Monroe. "However, today's news is a grim reminder of the importance of getting the H1N1 flu vaccine out to Hoosiers as soon as possible."

Dr. Monroe says the supply of the live, attenuated nasal mist form of the H1N1 flu vaccine is currently limited, with less than 25,000 doses having been delivered to Indiana. Most local health departments across the state have placed orders for the nasal mist form of the vaccine, but not all of them have actually received delivery of the vaccine.

At this time, 35 local health departments have received the live, attenuated nasal mist form of the H1N1 flu vaccine. For information on availability of the H1N1 flu vaccine in a given county, the public can visit www.in.gov/flu or call **1-877-826-0011 (or TTY 1-888-561-0044), Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.**

"I wish we had enough H1N1 flu vaccine to vaccinate every Hoosier who wants it," said Dr. Monroe. "We are asking everyone to continue to be patient as the State Health Department and the local health departments work hard to do whatever we can to get this vaccine out to communities as soon as possible.

"Shipments of the H1N1 flu vaccine are small and will be coming to Indiana gradually in the coming weeks," said Dr. Monroe. "We are asking the public to stay tuned, and we will get information out to them as quickly as possible," said Dr. Monroe.

Dr. Monroe continues to urge the public to get the seasonal flu vaccine. She reports 76 local health departments currently have some supply of the seasonal flu vaccine, although availability may be restricted to children. Seasonal flu vaccine is also available from private providers, and Dr. Monroe encourages the public to check within their local communities to determine what private providers, like pharmacies, might be providing the seasonal flu vaccine.

Dr. Monroe encourages Hoosiers to continue to practice the three Cs to prevent the spread of the flu virus: Clean - properly wash your hands frequently, Cover - cover your cough and sneeze, and Contain - contain your germs by staying home if you are sick.

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