

NCHD to hold H1N1 vaccination clinics

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

The Northeast Colorado Health Department has scheduled three large walk-in H1N1 vaccination clinics on Saturday, Dec. 5 in Haxtun, Holyoke and Julesburg.

These public clinics will be held in Haxtun at the Haxtun Community Center, in Holyoke at the Vet's Club and in Julesburg at the Sedgwick County Ambulance Service. They will all run from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. or until vaccine runs out.

H1N1 vaccinations from NCHD are free of charge.

Although the groups of individuals receiving vaccine has expanded, doses are still limited and they will be given on a first come, first served basis. Those people eligible to receive vaccine now include:

- —Pregnant women.

—People who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age.

—All healthcare and emergency medical services personnel.

—All people from 6 months through 24 years of age.

—Persons aged 25 through 64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza.

Vaccinations will not be given during this large clinic to individuals that do not fall into one of the above categories.

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In order to speed up the process of a large walk-in clinic, residents are urged to visit the health department's web site, www.nchd.org, and print out the appropriate H1N1 consent forms listed on the front page. There are two forms listed in both English and Spanish, one for adults age 18 and over and one for children. A separate consent form must be filled out for each person receiving a vaccination. Those that print and fill out the forms prior to showing up at the clinic will move through the check-in process faster.

"Since we have received less vaccine than anticipated we are just now getting the opportunity to open large clinics," said John Crosthwait, NCHD's district public health administrator.

According to Crosthwait over 13,000 doses of the H1N1 vaccine have already been distributed in NCHD's six-county health district. In addition to public health, many private healthcare providers and local hospitals have taken active roles in their communities to help get the vaccine to those individuals most at risk for severe illness.

"I think the vaccine situation has proven to be frustrating to a number of our residents, but we are working with our area partners to ensure we're doing all we can to offer the vaccinations as soon as possible to those most at risk," said Crosthwait. "For those of you who are not yet eligible to receive a vaccine or have chosen not to receive one, please continue to stay home when you're ill, wash your hands and cover your coughs."

For more information about H1N1 clinics and other recent updates visit www.nchd.org.