

DPH SHU Weekly Email Updates August 24, 2010

It was a pleasure to see 250 of the Massachusetts School Nurses during the Summer Institute/Leadership Academy this week. Congratulations to Northeastern for an excellent conference! In keeping with the goals of the conference, we are hopeful that you all will continue to demonstrate your leadership. Here are a few suggestions:

- Develop your communication strategy regarding what school nurses do and the importance of your services to the health and education of the students. See the first attachment.
- "Invite" yourselves--if you are not already invited-- to important meetings where health is an issue.
- Anticipate this year's priorities and share information on them---you are the health expert! Priorities this year may include, but not be limited to (a) BMI screening and programming in nutrition/physical activity, (b) the school nutrition law, (c) the new concussion law, (d) mental/behavioral health, (e) need for flu immunizations, etc. Copies of the laws were sent previously but can be sent again.

From time to time we will send additional leadership hints--and please share yours also. Please feel free to use any written material we send--or the school health manual--in any plans to write a weekly/monthly column in the local newspaper, place information on the school website, etc. Sign it with your name. In addition, you may use our information in helping you with presentations to the local PTAs, site based councils or community organizations, e.g., Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.

1. Sharing BMI Data: This message was sent last week and is repeated here: We wanted to let you know that the Department of Public Health has not been encouraging stories on the aggregate BMI data you have sent to us, nor is it encouraging press requests. However, we cannot refuse them due to the Freedom of Information Act. John Auerbach, Commissioner, has just informed me that we will try to give you a heads up if there is a request for the aggregate data for a specific city or town, as we do not want you to be taken by surprise. However, he also wanted you to know that we have just received a request for the rates for every city and town from the Boston Globe. Please make sure you share this information with your superintendent.

As this initiative unfolds, we hope you will share your aggregate data with as many local stakeholders as possible, and as soon as you have it--the school administrators, school committee, local/regional planning councils, PTAs, boards of health, local hospitals, PCPs, etc. They all have a stake in helping to address the problem of obesity. Hopefully they will be supportive of the school's role, and help with the community-wide initiatives.

Again, have a nice weekend and thank you for all your efforts on behalf of children.

2. Flu and Flu Clinic Information:

- **Guidance for Schools on This Year's Influenza Issues:** As we did last year, the Department is preparing information to schools and to parents regarding the FY11 influenza season. These documents will be issued shortly and I will send them finalized.
- **National Influenza Initiatives:** Please see the attached letter from Anne Schuchat, MD, Assistant Surgeon General and Director, National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. Please distribute widely, as appropriate, to all clinical, public health, and immunization partners. Additional resources such as campaign messages will be shared very soon.

Be sure to check www.flu.gov and www.cdc.gov/flu for updated information and campaign products throughout the month of August as we prepare for the launch of the annual National Influenza Vaccination Campaign.

- **School-Located Influenza Vaccine Clinics:** If you are planning a seasonal flu clinic, for further information, please contact Mary Conant at 617 983-6862.
- **The 2010 – 2011 Influenza Vaccine Information Statements (VISs)** can be found at www.immunize.org/vis. They will soon be available in different languages at this same web site.
- **Influenza Vaccine Standing Orders:** Please see the attached influenza vaccine standing orders for 2010 – 2011. These will also be posted on the MDPH website at www.mass.gov/flu.

Labeling of Latex-Containing Syringe Caps: You may be aware of a recent issue involving labeling of latex containing syringe tip caps. Specifically, the tip caps of the prefilled syringes of the following vaccines may contain natural rubber latex which may cause allergic reactions in latex sensitive individuals: Agriflu; Engerix; Havrix; Hiberix; Fluarix; Fluvirin; and Fluzone.

Although no adverse event reports have prompted labeling changes, each of the affected manufacturers is working on this issue with FDA to ensure that the prescribing information, package labeling, and provider communications contain important information about the latex content of flu and non-flu vaccines. In the event that we learn of manufacturer labeling efforts impacting timing of product delivery, we will share that information with you. Private providers will receive this information in their vaccine shipments directly from the manufacturers. However, public vaccine shipments distributed by McKesson will not include this information. Therefore, please share the attached flyers with this information regarding the possibility of latex in tip caps of prefilled syringes with your colleagues.

3. Work-Related Asthma: The Occupational Health Surveillance Program has just released a summary of Work-related Asthma cases identified by the sentinel surveillance system, 1995-2008. The Occupational Lung Disease Bulletin describes the use of emergency department treated cases as an important data source. Over 1200 individuals were ascertained from various sources and 596 cases were confirmed by telephone interview, using criteria developed with NIOSH and three work-related asthma surveillance states (CA, NJ, MI). The Bulletin shows the leading industries, occupations and exposures among the confirmed cases in Massachusetts. Please continue to report suspect and confirmed work-related asthma cases to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Attached is a reporting form, Elise Pechter MPH, CIH, Industrial Hygienist, Occupational Health Surveillance Program, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, 250 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108, 617 624-5681, Fax: 617 624-5676

Confidential fax: 617 624-5696

4. Risks of Children Touching Buprenorphine/Suboxone/Subutex: In order to protect children from accidental poisoning, we will appreciate your notifying your listservs. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is distributing a new pamphlet warning patients and providers about the risks of children touching Buprenorphine/Suboxone/Subutex, "Pediatric/Child Exposure to Buprenorphine/Suboxone/Subutex: Protecting Others and Protecting Treatment." This pamphlet is available in bulk quantities at no charge as a print pamphlet, or as a PDF document. Even small amounts of this medicine can cause severe injury or death, even several hours after they have touched it. The pamphlet highlights how to keep children away from these medications, and what to do if you think a child has had contact with the pills. The pamphlet and the PDF are available at www.macclearinghouse.com, or by calling 1-800-952-6637 (TTY: 617-536-5872).

5. Pertussis Burden on the Household: Please see the attached article, *Pertussis Disease Burden in the Household: How to Protect Young Infants*, which was published in *Clinical Infectious Diseases* in May, and the accompanying editorial commentary by Drs. Al DeMaria and Susan Lett.

6. IMPORTANT! Revised Forms: We are working on your suggested revisions to the Monthly Activities Reports, the Epinephrine Reports and the Status Reports and will have them to you shortly. We had hoped to get them out earlier--this has been a short summer!

7. THANK YOU: The FY10 epinephrine administration reports have just been inputted and the report will be released in a few months. There were 225 administrations of epinephrine to individuals experiencing a life threatening allergic event in the Massachusetts schools this past year. All outcomes were positive---thanks to your prompt, expert actions!

1. Communication Tips for School Nurses

2. Final School Nutrition Law

3. Letter regarding Seasonal Flu Vaccine

4. Childhood Vaccine Availability

5. Adult " "

6. Standing Order---Seasonal LAIV

7. Standing Order ----Seasonal TIV

8. VIS--LAIV Flu

9. VIS ---TIV Flu

10. MMRW: Prevention of Flu with vaccines

11. Prevention of Flu Conference

12. Seizure Conference

13. Fire Safety Program

14. Seminars for Asthma Educators--
School nurses may wish to attend

15. Sports Medicine for the PCP--please share with your school physicians

16. Report on Occupational Lung Disease

17. Confidential Reporting Form on Work-Related Health Issues

18. Buprenorphine Booklet

Have a pleasant weekend and enjoy the last days of summer!

Anne H. Sheetz
Director of School Health Services
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
250 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02108
Telephone: (617) 624-6018
FAX: (617) 624-6062
anne.sheetz@state.ma.us