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HOLIDAY HOURS FOR THE VDH INQUIRY CENTER

(RICHMOND, Va.)—To help Virginians get updated information about the H1N1 influenza virus and vaccine availability, the Virginia Department of Health Inquiry Center will remain open before and after Thanksgiving.

Holiday hours will be from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Wednesday, November 25, and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Friday, November 27.

The Inquiry Center will be closed on Thanksgiving. Regular hours, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays will resume Monday.

The toll-free number is 1-877-ASK-VDH3 (1-877-275-8343).

“While many state offices are closed to celebrate Thanksgiving, we want to be here for anyone with questions about H1N1 flu,” said Suzi Silverstein, VDH Inquiry Center Manager.

“Staying open will allow Virginians an opportunity to get accurate information about their concerns. We encourage everybody to check our Web page for updated information on where and when H1N1 vaccination clinics are occurring throughout the state,” Silverstein said.

As of Monday, November 23, more than 1 million doses of novel H1N1 vaccine have been made available in Virginia. Currently vaccine is being provided through private medical practices, clinics, and local health departments with the focus on first immunizing those children and adults in the CDC’s priority groups. These priority groups include all children and adults ages 6 months to 24 years of age, pregnant women, adults ages 25 to 64 with underlying health conditions, healthcare and emergency medical workers who provide direct patient care, and those adults who live with or care for infants less than six months of age. Vaccine will be offered to all who desire this protection after the priority groups have been served.

The Inquiry Center will also answer questions by e-mail. Go to www.H1N1Get1.com, click on Virginia and the link to submit a question.

For more information on the H1N1 influenza virus, go online to the Virginia Department of Health Web site at <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov> or the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov>.