

**For Immediate Release**

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## Virginia Broadens H1N1 Vaccination Opportunities

**Richmond, Va., December 10, 2009** – Dr. Karen Remley, Virginia’s health commissioner announced today broader opportunities for H1N1 vaccination. While the focus remains on all priority groups, emphasis is being placed on young adults ages 19 to 24 whose vaccination rates have not been as high as other target groups.

“We have received more than 2 million doses of vaccine in Virginia since October,” said Dr. Remley. “Private doctors’ offices, hospitals, clinics and local health departments have vaccinated many of those at high risk for H1N1 flu, but we can now reach out to more Virginians, especially young adults. Young adults, whether they are working one of their first jobs, in college studying, or home caring for a young family, should all be protected against this influenza strain.”

Dr. Remley stated a three-pronged approach as the vaccination campaign enters its mid-stage:

- Encouraging physicians to broaden the scope of whom they vaccinate – for instance, offering vaccine to all patients
- VDH is working with the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association to encourage all Virginia hospitals to implement “standing orders” to offer H1N1 vaccinations to all patients who are discharged from the hospital, similar to current seasonal flu vaccination procedures
- The nasal mist form of H1N1 flu vaccine will start to be shipped to pharmacies next week. The nasal mist vaccine is recommended for healthy, non-pregnant persons 2 through 49 years of age.

Other forms of the vaccine should start arriving in pharmacies and retail outlets by the winter holiday break, making it available to all Virginians.

“For the past two months, local health departments and doctors’ offices around the state have worked hard and have done a great job vaccinating those in high risk groups,” said Dr. Remley. “While we continue to reach out to the target groups, making vaccine more widely available can help minimize the impact of this disease.”

Additional information, including a Google Flu Clinic Locator tool, can be found on the Web site, [www.H1N1Get1.com](http://www.H1N1Get1.com). Information also is available by calling 1.877.ASK.VDH3. A link to the graph indicating the percentage of doses administered by age groups is located at: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/DiseasePrevention/H1N1/pdf/12-09-09Doses.pdf>

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