



Ohio Department of Health
246 N. High Street,
Columbus, OH 43215

www.odh.ohio.gov

News Release

John R. Kasich / Governor
Theodore E. Wymyslo, M.D. / Director



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Media Contact: Jen House, Office of Public Affairs, 614.644.8562

Ohio's H1N1 Vaccination Efforts Prevented Deaths, Hospitalizations and Illness

Study estimates that more than 310,000 cases of H1N1 in Ohio were prevented during 2009 pandemic

Columbus-An Ohio Department of Health (ODH) study released today estimates that Ohio's H1N1 vaccination efforts prevented 64 deaths, 1,400 hospitalizations and 310,402 cases of influenza during the 2009 H1N1 pandemic. The study also estimates that Ohio's vaccination efforts saved the state \$8.4 million in H1N1 related hospitalization costs.

"Our analysis indicated that Ohio's collaborative response to the H1N1 pandemic saved lives and kept more than a thousand Ohioans out of the hospital," said ODH Director Ted Wymyslo, M.D. "By working together to respond to public health threats, like H1N1, with partners in both the public and private sectors, ODH will continue to protect and improve the health of Ohioans."

The study estimates the number of H1N1 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths prevented from Ohio's H1N1 vaccination efforts within a one year time period (April 12, 2009 – April 10, 2010). Ohio researchers used a model published by researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to compare what occurred in Ohio to what could have occurred without vaccination efforts.

To protect Ohioans from the pandemic, ODH ordered and shipped 4.1 million doses of vaccine to more than 3,000 providers, including obstetricians, primary care physicians, local health departments and pharmacies from across the state. In addition, ODH released over \$50 million in federal emergency public health preparedness funds (over 90 percent of the funds received by Ohio) to support numerous vaccination clinics and prevention efforts at the local level.

"Ohio's local health departments sponsored hundreds of mass vaccination clinics and provided strong local leadership that was integral in our success," Dr. Wymyslo said. "Although the impact of physicians' efforts to evaluate, counsel and treat the surge in patients is not included in our study, it is clear that their efforts were a critical component in this unified effort to protect the health of our state's residents, during the pandemic."

The 2009 pandemic H1N1 virus, a unique combination of influenza virus genes never previously identified in either animals or people, was first detected in April 2009. In June 2009, in response to widespread H1N1 illness the World Health Organization declared H1N1 a pandemic. The pandemic ended in August 2010; however the H1N1 virus continues to circulate with other flu viruses across the nation and the globe.

For more information visit: www.flu.ohio.gov.