



# STATE OF OHIO

## Emergency Operations Center

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **ODH/LARGE RETAILERS PARTNER TO PROVIDE ANTIVIRAL MEDICATIONS**

COLUMBUS – The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) has announced an innovative public-private partnership with four large retail pharmacy chains to ensure sufficient antiviral medications are available to Ohioans this flu season.

ODH has reached agreements with Giant Eagle, Kroger, Meijer and Walgreens to send medication from the State stockpile to these chains as needed to address any shortages in the commercial marketplace. The chains will in turn send medications to stores where supplies are low, ensuring Ohioans throughout the state have easy access to antivirals when they need them.

Nearly 1.5 million courses of treatment are available; additional courses are available from federal sources, if necessary.

“I’m pleased these retailers have agreed to join us in our effort to help Ohioans as the H1N1 virus continues to cause widespread illness,” said Dr. Alvin Jackson, ODH Director. “By putting these plans in place, we can ensure Ohioans will have better access to antiviral medications to treat H1N1 infections even when supplies are limited.”

Giant Eagle, Kroger, Meijer and Walgreens have stores in 70 of Ohio’s 88 counties. In counties where these retailers do not have a presence, the state will continue to work with local health departments to provide antivirals through independent pharmacies.

For more information on H1N1 flu, check the ODH Web site at <http://www.flu.ohio.gov> or call the ODH H1N1 information line at 1-866-800-1404 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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