



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality
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Circular Letter: DHCQ: 11-11-553

TO: Hospital Chief Executive Officers
Clinic Chief Executive Officers or Practice Managers
Dialysis Center Chief Executive Officers
Long Term Care Facility Administrators

FROM: Madeleine Biondolillo, MD
Director, Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality

DATE: December 14, 2011

RE: Data Submission Instructions for Seasonal Influenza Vaccination of Employees at
Massachusetts Health Facilities for the 2011-2012 Influenza Season

The purpose of this letter is to provide instructions on the mandatory statewide reporting by licensed healthcare facilities of seasonal influenza vaccination rates of employees for the 2011-2012 influenza season.

Background

As a condition of licensure, Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) regulations require all licensed healthcare facilities to:

- offer, free-of charge, annual influenza vaccine to all personnel (full and part-time employees, contracted employees, volunteers, house staff and students);
- document receipt of influenza vaccine administered within and outside the facility or document the declination of immunization.¹
- report information to MDPH documenting compliance with the vaccination requirement, in accordance with reporting and data collection guidelines of the Commissioner (105 CMR 130.325(I), 140.150(C) , 150.002(D)(8).

¹ 105 CMR 130.00 Hospital Licensure; 105 CMR 140.000 Licensure of Clinics; 105 CMR 150.000 Licensing of Long-Term Care Facilities; and 105 CMR 145.000 Licensing of Out -of -Hospital Dialysis Units are available at www.mass.gov/dph.

The MDPH has established an overall minimum performance goal for **acute care hospital** healthcare employee vaccination rates for the 2011-2012 influenza season. Statewide, the MDPH expects that a 90% influenza vaccination coverage rate will be reached for all **acute care hospital** employees, with no facility reporting a rate less than 73% (two percentage points above the Massachusetts acute care hospital average reported rate of 71% in 2010-2011). The goal of this policy is to advance patient safety by ensuring optimal healthcare employee influenza vaccination coverage of those who do not have a medical contraindication.

In addition to meeting the licensing requirements, the data collected during the 2011-2012 influenza season will be publicly reported prior to the 2012-2013 influenza season and will be used to guide future policy development and to set public health priorities. To standardize and simplify data submission processes, and reduce the financial and environmental impact of printing, copying and mailing, all results must be submitted electronically. Detailed instructions for completing the MDPH 2011-2012 seasonal influenza reporting requirements for healthcare employees will be posted to www.mass.gov/dph/dhcq by December 21, 2011. Upon reaching the Division of Health Care Safety and Quality website, click on the "Influenza Vaccination Reporting 2011-2012" link to access reporting requirements.

Data Reporting Methodology

Healthcare facility specific vaccination rates will be publicly reported as a percentage. The rate is calculated by dividing the number of healthcare facility employees vaccinated (numerator) by the total of number of healthcare employees (denominator). While all personnel, including non-employee personnel, must be offered influenza vaccine, the reportable measure of effectiveness is based on employees, as defined by the payroll. To standardize the method of calculating employees for the denominator, all healthcare facilities are required to report the number of persons receiving a paycheck from the facility on December 31, 2011. The numerator rates will include both employees receiving seasonal influenza vaccination from the healthcare facility and employees receiving seasonal influenza vaccination outside the healthcare facility (i.e. private physician's office, community health center, etc.). The percentage of facility specific employee declinations will also be reported separately.

Please review and share this document with all persons in your healthcare facility responsible for infection prevention, employee health, and quality management reporting.

Seasonal influenza vaccination is an effective method of preventing influenza virus infection and its potentially serious complications. MDPH is committed to working with you to ensure that patients and personnel are protected. Thank you for your ongoing participation in this important initiative. Please submit questions concerning the reporting and data submission requirements to the Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality at dhcq.fludata@state.ma.us

Please forward this circular letter to the following staff at your facility: Chief Nursing Officer, Clinic Chief Nursing Officers, Dialysis Center Chief Nursing Officers, and Long Term Care Facility Directors of Nursing

CC: Acute Care Hospital Infection Preventionists,
Acute Care Hospital Occupational Health Professionals,
John Auerbach, Commissioner,
Alfred DeMaria, MD, Bureau of Infectious Diseases