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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TO: Clinic Chief Executive Officers or Practice Managers

FROM: Elizabeth Kelley, MPH, MBA, Director

Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality

DATE: June 17, 2021

RE: Seasonal Influenza Vaccination of Healthcare Personnel at Massachusetts Clinics for the 2020-2021 Influenza Season

The purpose of this memorandum is to remind clinics[[1]](#footnote-1) of the process to report mandatory healthcare personnel (HCP) influenza data and to provide guidance for facilities to fulfill the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) requirement for submission of annual HCP influenza data to the Department by August 15, 2021.

This memorandum shall supersede all circular letters for prior influenza seasons related to the reporting of seasonal influenza vaccination of healthcare personnel at clinics.

**Background**

As a condition of licensure[[2]](#footnote-2), DPH 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; and
* Report information to DPH, documenting compliance with the vaccination requirement, in accordance with reporting and data collection guidelines of the Commissioner.[[3]](#footnote-3)

DPH has established an overall minimum performance goal for all licensed facility HCP vaccination rates. Statewide, DPH expects that 90% or greater influenza vaccination coverage rate will be reached for all HCP. This performance goal is intended to advance patient and HCP health and safety by ensuring optimal HCP influenza vaccination coverage, and is in alignment with the National Healthy People 2020 target of 90% influenza coverage of HCP.[[4]](#footnote-4)

To protect the lives and welfare of patients, employees, and communities, as well as to improve quality and reduce healthcare costs, DPH encourages all healthcare facilities to implement an evidence-based influenza vaccination initiative to achieve the established goal of vaccinating at least 90% of eligible HCP. A key component of successful immunization programs includes senior leadership commitment and accountability for outcomes. Please see the References and Resources List aimed at assisting healthcare facilities to develop influenza campaigns and identify best practices for increasing HCP vaccination rates.

DPH will continue to reinforce the reporting requirement and statewide performance goal during trainings, and on-site visits in licensed healthcare facilities. Facility specific data is published annually and available to the public on the DPH website.

**Reporting Healthcare Personnel Influenza (HCP) Data for the 2020-2021 Influenza Season**

* DPH requires all Massachusetts clinics to report HCP influenza data through the web-based application, SurveyMonkey®.
* Only reports submitted through SurveyMonkey® will be accepted.
* Each licensed clinic is required to report the following:
	+ Complete demographic and facility contact information
	+ Number of healthcare facility employees who worked in the healthcare facility for at least 1 day between October 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021
	+ Number of healthcare facility employees who received an influenza vaccine at the healthcare facility since the influenza vaccine became available this season
	+ Number of healthcare facility employees who provided a written report or documentation of influenza vaccination outside the healthcare facility since influenza vaccine became available this season
	+ Number of healthcare facility employees who have a medical contraindication to the influenza vaccine
	+ Number of healthcare facility employees not captured in the three categories above.

*NEW*

* **To assist facilities in documenting, monitoring and tracking HCP influenza data throughout the flu season, DPH has developed a Facility Flu Tracking Tool available at the following link:** [**https://www.mass.gov/info-details/flu-vaccination-reporting-requirements-for-health-care-personnel**](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/flu-vaccination-reporting-requirements-for-health-care-personnel)**.**

Please see Data Submission Instructions for detailed instructions on how to successfully complete and submit HCP Influenza Vaccination data for the 2020-2021 season.

**The deadline for data submission is August 15, 2021, at 5:00 pm. To access the online survey, please click on the following link:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BM3VH5J>

To facilitate timely, accurate and complete reporting of the HCP influenza vaccination measure, please ensure that this memorandum is forwarded to all persons in your healthcare facility responsible for infection prevention, employee health, and quality management reporting including but not limited to: Infection Preventionists, Occupational Health Professionals, Nursing and Medical Directors, Directors of Quality Improvement, and Directors of Human Resources.

Annual vaccination is the most important measure to prevent seasonal influenza infection.[[5]](#footnote-5) Protecting healthcare personnel and preventing the transmission of influenza to patients and communities is a shared responsibility. DPH is dedicated 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.

1. This guidance applies to all clinics except for ambulatory surgical centers. Ambulatory surgical centers are required to report influenza HCP vaccination data to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 105 CMR 140.150. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. 105 CMR 140.150. Please note that DPH regulations do not allow for reporting unknown vaccine status.

See 105 CMR 140.150(H)(1). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://www.healthypeople.gov/node/4668/data_details> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/healthcaresettings.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)