



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

Oxiris Barbot, MD  
Commissioner

January 7, 2020

Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc  
Assistant Commissioner  
Bureau of Immunization

42-09 28<sup>th</sup> Street, CN21  
Queens, NY 11101-4132

Dear Colleague:

This is an update on influenza activity and the availability and distribution of seasonal flu vaccine. Currently, influenza activity is high in the United States, and has been categorized as geographically widespread in New York State (NYS). Influenza activity is elevated in New York City (NYC), and is expected to increase in the coming weeks. Specimens in NYC and NYS continue to test positive for both influenza A and B.

As of December 13, 2019, about 171 million doses of flu vaccine have been distributed nationally, which is about 4 million more doses than last season at this time, and 20 million more doses than at this time in the 2017-18 season.

In NYC, we have been allocated virtually all of the flu vaccine that we pre-booked for the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program, and all requested vaccine has been shipped to facilities. Flu vaccine orders continue to be processed at this time. All products remain in good supply. For help with your VFC flu order, please call (347) 396-2489. **If you need additional VFC vaccine, don't stop vaccination efforts; update your flu vaccine order so we can ship more vaccine.**

Flu vaccine is still available for purchase for providers and medical facilities who need vaccine for their non-VFC eligible or adult populations. More information about what products are available can be found at <https://www.izsubmitpartners.org/ivats/>.

All children six months through 59 months of age enrolled in New York City Article 47 & 43 regulated pre-kindergarten programs (Child Care, Head Start, Nursery or Pre-K) must receive one dose of flu vaccine between July 1<sup>st</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. Since it is now January, children who did not receive their flu vaccine are now excludable from their pre-kindergarten programs if they do not have a valid medical exemption.

Since influenza activity has been classified as widespread in NYS, all staff working at health care and residential facilities and agencies regulated pursuant to Articles 28, 36, or 40 of the Public Health Law who are not vaccinated against influenza must wear a mask when they are in areas where patients or residents may be present.

For questions on flu vaccine, other than those pertaining to your VFC order, please call (347) 396-2400 or email [nycimmunize@health.nyc.gov](mailto:nycimmunize@health.nyc.gov). We thank you for your continuing efforts at protecting NYC residents from influenza.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jane R. Zucker'.

Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc