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PRESS RELEASE

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Vouchers for Free Flu Vaccines Available to Uninsured

Concord, NH – The State of New Hampshire along with numerous community organizations are now distributing vouchers for free flu shots to uninsured people. The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) selected the State of New Hampshire as one of the 15 markets to receive vouchers as part of a Walgreens initiative to increase vaccination among those insured.

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Immunization Program is working with Walgreens pharmacies, Walgreens Take Care Clinics, the Public Health Networks and many community organizations in New Hampshire to distribute flu shot vouchers where there are disparities in vaccination rates and opportunities to address them.

Each voucher covers the cost of a flu shot and its administration at any area Walgreens pharmacy. There are no costs or fees to the voucher recipients.

The “Protecting All From Flu” program is also intended to help more minorities receive a flu vaccine because they are often at higher risk of serious illness from influenza, one reason being higher rates of underlying health conditions, and are often less likely to receive a flu vaccine. New Hampshire was invited to participate along with 14 other communities across the country, thanks to the \$10 million donation of vaccines by Walgreens.

“This is a great opportunity for us to increase the rate of vaccination among the uninsured and decrease the number of people who will get the flu this year,” said New Hampshire Public Health Director Dr. José Montero. “Unfortunately in New Hampshire there is a difference in the influenza vaccination rate between whites and minorities and between individuals with insurance and those without. This project will not only increase the vaccination rate but also help DHHS learn new ways to reach out to individuals who currently cannot access vaccines.”

Anyone who is 9 years old or older and uninsured is eligible for one of the 5000 vouchers in New Hampshire. People who are interested should call 211 to find out where to get a voucher at a location near them. The voucher can then be turned in at any Walgreens pharmacy in New Hampshire for a free flu vaccine. The program will run from now until April 15th, or until all the vouchers have been distributed.

For questions, contact DHHS' Immunization Program by calling 603-271-4482. For more information about the flu vaccine or other vaccines, visit the Immunization Program website at <http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/immunization/index.htm>.

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