



DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Promoting and protecting health, well-being, self-sufficiency, and safety of all in Marin County.



September 15, 2016

TO: Marin County Hospitals, Clinics, Medical Offices, Skilled Nursing Facilities and other Long-Term Care Facilities, Hospice, Home Health Agencies, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and other Health Facilities

RE: Mandatory Influenza Vaccination of All Health Care Workers

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Influenza is one of the leading causes of preventable death from infection in the United States. In 2013, Marin County implemented mandatory flu vaccination to all health care facilities. Mandated vaccination of health care workers is shown to increase vaccination rates to above 95%, reducing absenteeism and preventing patient morbidity and mortality.

Influenza immunization rates among staff at Marin County health care facilities have increased since implementing the order for mandatory vaccination. One Marin County hospital reported a 10% increase in the percentage of employees vaccinated for influenza. Last year, we included EMS providers, whose agency reported excellent compliance with the order.

For the 2016-17 flu season, in addition to this Health Officer order, I am encouraging residential care, senior housing, and health care facilities to promote influenza vaccination among caregivers, home health workers, and volunteers who visit their facilities.

Background:

State law requires that general acute care hospitals and certain other health care facilities offer influenza vaccination to employees and, for those employees who decline vaccination, maintain a record of the signed declination form ([CA Code of Regulations §5199 Aerosol Transmissible Diseases](#)).

Order:

All health care facilities and EMS providers in Marin County must implement a program requiring their health care workers to receive an annual influenza vaccination or, if they decline, to wear a mask for the duration of the influenza season while working in patient care areas in that health care facility.

Duration:

This order is ongoing and applies to each future influenza season unless modified, suspended, or rescinded. Influenza season starts October 31, 2016 (start of week 44) and ends April 30, 2017 (start of week 18). If influenza surveillance shows unusually early and/or late peaks, the order may be extended.

Facilities Subject to the Order:

This order applies to all health care facilities and EMS providers, including but not limited to: hospitals, skilled nursing and other long-term care facilities, outpatient

medical clinics, hospice, home health agencies, and facilities as defined in the [California Health & Safety Code Sections 1200-1209 and 1250-1264](#).

Definition of Health Care Worker:

For the purposes of this order, “health care workers” or “HCWs” are persons, paid or unpaid, working in health care settings who have potential for exposure to patients, infectious materials or contaminated surfaces.

Institutions nationwide and in California have been recognized by the Influenza Vaccination Honor Roll as champions by taking the lead in mandating influenza vaccination and implementing serious transmission prevention measures within their organization or institution. For more information please visit <http://www.immunize.org/honor-roll/>.

For any additional questions, please contact Danielle Hiser, Immunization Coordinator at (415) 473 3078.

Thank you for your role in keeping Marin County the healthiest county in California.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Santora MD, MPH
Deputy Public Health Officer