



SAN BENITO COUNTY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

GAIL NEWEL, MD, MPH
HEALTH OFFICER

JAMES A. RYDINGSWORD
AGENCY DIRECTOR

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
Healthy People in Healthy Communities

Date: 15 September 2017

To: Licensed Health-Care Facilities Administrators & Staff & EMS Providers

From: Gail Newel, MD, MPH, County Public Health Officer

Subject: Health Officer Order for Licensed Health Care Facilities in San Benito County to Implement Influenza Vaccination Programs for Health Care Workers During the 2017-2018 Influenza Season.

Preface

Influenza vaccination of health care workers (HCWs) protects medically fragile patients and reduces employee absenteeism during influenza season. State law requires that acute care hospitals and certain employers offer influenza vaccinations to employees or have the employee sign a declination statement if they choose not to be vaccinated. While employer compliance with the existing law has been high, vaccination rates among HCWs has historically been low.

Mandatory vaccination with masking policies in health care facilities have been shown to increase HCW vaccination rates to above 90%. In 2014, a Health Officer Order was issued to licensed health care facilities requiring that facilities implement programs that require their HCWs to provide evidence of influenza vaccination or to wear a surgical mask while working in patient care areas during the influenza season. Health care facility compliance with the order has resulted in an increase in flu vaccination rates among HCWs over the past few years.

Therefore, in order to maintain a higher rate of influenza vaccination among HCWs and to protect patients from morbidity and mortality associated with influenza infection, I am issuing the following Health Officer Order.

Order

I, as Health Officer of San Benito County, do hereby order all licensed health care facilities (hospitals, clinics, skilled nursing and other long-term care facilities) and EMS agencies in the county to adopt and implement policies and programs to require all HCW and EMS providers to receive the annual flu vaccine or to wear a surgical mask while working in patient care areas during the flu season.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
439 Fourth Street
Hollister, CA 95023
831-637-5367

MEDICAL THERAPY UNIT
761 South Street
Hollister, CA 95023
831-637-1989

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
351 Tres Pinos Road, Suite C-1
Hollister, CA 95023
831-636-4035

HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS
439 Fourth Street
Hollister, CA 95023
831-637-5367

Health Officer Order
Health Care Worker Influenza Vaccination Program
15 September 2017

Definitions

For the purposes of this order, "licensed health care facility" shall be defined as any facility, place, or building licensed by the California Department of Public Health Licensing and Certification Branch that is organized, maintained, and operated for the diagnosis, care, prevention, and treatment of human illness, physical or mental, including convalescence and rehabilitation care and including care during and after pregnancy, or for any one or more of these purposes, for one or more persons. A list of facilities licensed by the California Department of Public Health Licensing and Certification Branch can be found at: <http://hfcis.cdph.ca.gov/Reports/GenerateReport.aspx?rpt=FacilityListing>.

"Health care worker" shall be defined as any employed or non-employed individual who provides direct patient care or who works in a patient care area.

"Influenza vaccine" shall be defined as a vaccine approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration or recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices for the 2017-2018 influenza season.

"Influenza season" is defined as November 1, 2017, through April 30, 2018. If influenza surveillance data suggest that the influenza season may end before or extend beyond April 30, 2018, then this order may be amended to shorten or extend the influenza season.

"Patient care area" shall be defined and determined by the facility, in consultation with the San Benito County Public Health Services.

Resources

San Benito County is committed to assisting facilities that are subject to this order. Please contact the San Benito County Public Health Services at 831-637-5367.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Gail Newel, MD, MPH
Health Officer

Date of Issuance of Order