

## **Influenza vaccines available in public hospitals**

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EMBARGO: NONE

The Department of Health wishes to alert the public that the H1N1 influenza vaccines have been available since the 6th April 2010.

There have been a number of concerns raised by the general public on the confusing information around the availability of the vaccines at state institutions. In spite of a number of assurances and correct information being communicated, some people believe that these are not available for themselves and their next of kin.

In response to this imminent threat, the Department commenced and broadened its Vaccination campaign (as early as 6th April – 31 May 2010) to provide vaccines to front line health care workers, pregnant women, children under 15 years with HIV and AIDS and persons receiving treatment for lung and heart conditions. They are given a combination vaccine for H1N1 and seasonal influenza.

It is expected that the second round will cover the rest of the people including SAPS personnel, SANDF, people with chronic conditions, etc. The World Health Organizations (WHO) donated 3 million doses of vaccines.

“The supply of these vaccines has hit the private sector the worst as the pharmaceutical companies cannot meet the demand. As such, the greatest challenge has been the low production of vaccines by pharmaceutical companies.” said Dr Sibongile Zungu, the Head of Department.

The Department had order sufficient quantities for the citizens of KwaZulu-Natal and the country not in an effort to stockpile these but to ensure that those who need the vaccines receive them on time.

ISSUED BY:  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH: KWAZULU-NATAL  
CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS