

# Schools Cited as Likely H1N1 Vaccination Sites

BY HEIDI SPLETE

BETHESDA, MD. — The most likely scenario involving the influenza A (H1N1) virus this fall is that young people in schools will be disproportionately affected, said Dr. Anne Schuchat, director of the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"We might need to offer interventions

to people who aren't used to getting even a seasonal influenza vaccine," Dr. Schuchat said during a breakout session on vaccine preparation and distribution at an H1N1 Influenza Preparedness Summit sponsored by the National Institutes of Health.

Final recommendations for prioritizing H1N1 vaccination are expected to come from the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. In the mean-

time, the CDC's H1N1 Vaccine Task Force has developed a guidance document with a best-case planning scenario, so clinicians have some idea what might unfold if the number of H1N1 viral infections surges in the fall.

The document describes likely target populations and presents ideas for where and how the H1N1 vaccines could be administered.

Students and staff associated with

schools, children aged 6 months and older, child care center staff, and health care workers would be among those on the high-priority list in the likely event that the vaccine's availability is limited. In a best-case scenario, students would be vaccinated at schools and child care centers, and health care workers would be vaccinated in their work environments.

The goal in any emergency is to "keep our children safe and keep them learning," Arne Duncan, secretary of the Department of Education said at the summit's morning session. School closings are a last resort, and more guidance is needed at the local level to help schools make informed decisions about what level of illness merits a closing. However, "most school districts have developed good emergency plans," he added. ■

## WHO Panel: Health Workers Are Top Priority

Health care workers should be the top priority to receive immunization with the pandemic influenza vaccine, and individual countries should take their nations' domestic needs into account when determining how to prioritize inoculating subgroups vulnerable to the virus, a top international health panel has decided.

The World Health Organization's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization has said that vaccinating health care workers is necessary to maintain a functioning health care system and prevent infection with the pandemic influenza A (H1N1) virus in people who have pre-existing illnesses, Dr. Marie-Paule Kieny, director of WHO's initiative for vaccine research, said in a press teleconference.

Countries are advised to prioritize the vaccination of such vulnerable groups as the chronically ill and children depending on each country's domestic needs, Dr. Kieny said. For example, countries whose first priority is reducing sickness and death may choose to focus on inoculating the elderly and chronically ill first, while those countries whose priority is reducing the spread of infection may decide to inoculate schoolchildren first, she said.

The panel also concluded that at this time there is no concern regarding the safety of the tested pandemic influenza vaccine, but there is still an "urgent need" to collect more safety data on subgroups, Dr. Kieny said. New adjuvants are being used in some pandemic vaccines that have not been fully tested, so postmarketing surveillance must also be effective.

The panel added that Northern Hemisphere countries should proceed with plans for seasonal influenza vaccination as if there were no pandemic, because production of the seasonal vaccine is almost complete, she added.

—Jonathan Gardner

**Aveeno<sup>®</sup> Baby<sup>®</sup>**

**#1 Dermatologist Recommended Baby Sunblock**

**Aveeno<sup>®</sup> Baby<sup>®</sup>**  
**Continuous Protection<sup>™</sup>**  
**Sunblock Lotion**

SUNBURN PROTECTION  
**SPF 55**  
 Fragrance Free  
 Waterproof

American Academy of Dermatology  
**AAD**  
**SEAL OF RECOGNITION<sup>™</sup>**  
 The American Academy of Dermatology recognizes this product for its sun-protection benefit.

There's no such thing as  
**over protective**  
 when it comes to baby's skin.

+ **advanced photostable technology**  
 scientifically shown to maintain high levels of broad spectrum protection against UVA and UVB rays

+ **fragrance free, natural colloidal oatmeal**  
 formula is as gentle to baby's skin as water

that's the beauty of  
**nature+science**

© Johnson & Johnson Consumer Companies, Inc. 2009