



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

Oct. 8, 2004

CONTACT: Leslie Ridgeway (619) 685-2239

SAN DIEGO COUNTY TO FOLLOW STATE LEAD ON FLU VACCINE

County to Cooperate With Top Health Officer's Order to Limit Vaccine to High Risk People

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) will follow State Public Health Officer Dr. Richard Jackson's order today directing all healthcare providers in California to limit flu shots to individuals at high risk from developing complications from flu.

"As the state did today, we are asking local healthcare providers not to immunize healthy people in order to reserve vaccine for those who really need it," said Nancy Bowen, M.D., San Diego County Public Health Officer. "We are asking all of our local physicians, community partners, other healthcare providers and the public to cooperate in following the state's order. We are counting on the entire community to cooperate."

The nation faces a shortage of flu vaccine after the Oct. 4 announcement that vaccine from Chiron Corporation, maker of half the United States' flu vaccine supply, would not be available this flu season due to manufacturing problems.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, those in the priority groups of high-risk individuals include: Children ages 6 to 23 months; adults over age 65; those ages 2 – 64 who have chronic disease; nursing home residents; healthcare workers, pregnant women, and those in close contact with children under 6 months of age.

There are many things healthy individuals can do to help stop the spread of flu, including: Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or shirt sleeve; stay away from sick people; wash hands frequently and use antibacterial products, and keep hands away from eyes, nose and mouth to prevent the spread of germs.

For more information on influenza, please visit the CDC Web site at www.cdc.gov.

###