



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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TENNESSEE EARNS AWARD FOR VACCINE PRE-REGISTRATION PROJECT

Receives 2009 AIM Bull's Eye Award for Innovation and Excellence

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The Tennessee Department of Health Immunization Program has been awarded the 2009 Bull's Eye Award for Innovation and Excellence in Immunization from the Association of Immunization Managers. AIM has recognized the state's success at using the Tennessee Web Immunization System, or TWIS, to register medical providers to receive important information and efficiently order H1N1 flu vaccine in preparation to respond to the H1N1 pandemic.

"Tennessee has been proactive in planning and organizing our pandemic flu efforts," said Health Commissioner Susan R. Cooper, MSN, RN. "The success of TWIS provides a foundation for additional applications in responding to H1N1 flu as well as other emergency situations."

Tennessee began pre-registering health care providers such as hospitals, pharmacists, doctors and other authorized users through TWIS on August 5, 2009. Since that date, 1,585 facilities successfully pre-registered and the process created here was a model for other state pre-registration systems. This initiative also increased use of the already established TWIS registry by enrolling 5,948 new TWIS users.

TWIS is a secure, confidential link to the immunization registry and serves as a single source of immunization records. The system allows authorized users to obtain comprehensive immunization information on patients, update or initiate new patient records and link to other Web sites to get more specific information on vaccines, vaccination strategies or current information from the Tennessee Immunization Program. Using TWIS as the site for pre-registration assured that only legitimate health care providers could register and has introduced thousands of new healthcare providers to its features and created a single, secure Web site to prepare them to store, handle and administer pandemic flu vaccine properly.

"Tennessee's Pandemic Influenza Vaccine Pre-Registration system was the first of its kind in the nation to answer the challenges of quickly identifying and engaging potential vaccine providers," said Kelly L. Moore, MD, MPH, medical director of the state Immunization Program. "The project has fully achieved its goals and beyond by facilitating our effective public-private partnership in vaccinating Tennesseans against H1N1 and by expanding the number immunization registry users."

AIM is a non-profit organization dedicated to facilitating immunization managers working together to effectively prevent and control vaccine-preventable diseases. The AIM Bull's Eye

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Award recognizes an outstanding immunization initiative and strategy that hits the mark of increasing immunization awareness and encouraging replication in other programs. Tennessee joins Hawaii and Washington as 2009 winners, although Tennessee was the only winner for a project specifically for the pandemic influenza vaccination campaign. Honorees will receive a plaque and present their winning initiatives at the AIM national meeting in January 2010.

The Tennessee Immunization Program is responsible for promoting the proper use of all recommended vaccines, in collaboration with the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other partners. Through public health activities, educational outreach and promoting awareness, the state program monitors and encourages a simple, safe and effective way to protect children and adults of all ages from a wide variety of potentially deadly diseases through vaccinations.

Rates of immunization have improved dramatically over the past few years in Tennessee. The most recent National Immunization Survey conducted by the CDC ranks the state as fourth in the country for rates of immunization of young children. Qualifying children in Tennessee can get all routinely recommended vaccines, regardless of ability to pay. The federal Vaccines for Children program guarantees that children without insurance can get them for a small administration fee at many of the same providers that initially enrolled with the award winning pre-registration project. These immunization services are available through all county health departments in Tennessee and at more than 500 physicians' offices across the state.

As H1N1 flu vaccine has become increasingly available across Tennessee, the state Immunization Program has shifted focus from registering to quickly and efficiently organizing the shipment of vaccine orders to providers. H1N1 vaccines are widely and readily available in many areas and will continue to be available over the coming months.

Flu vaccine locations are listed on the Tennessee Department of Health Flu Shot Locator at <http://health.state.tn.us/fluclinic/default.aspx>. For more information on the Tennessee Immunization program, visit the TDOH Web site at <http://health.state.tn.us/Ceds/immunization.htm>.

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