



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Department of Human Services
Public Health Division
800 NE Oregon Street
Portland, OR 97232-2162
Voice (971) 673-1111
FAX (971) 673-1100
TTY (971) 673-0372

Dear Colleagues:

This letter is to share information about a federal program (first announced in February) allowing critical infrastructure and key resource (CI/KR) organizations in Oregon to purchase antiviral medication at a reduced price in support of pandemic influenza planning efforts. Antiviral medications are just one of several interventions to limit the spread and complications of pandemic influenza.



If community partners such as CI/KR organizations were to stockpile these medications, coordinated use of the drugs could improve protection for all citizens, assuming a pandemic strain proves to be susceptible to them. Other strategies such as “social distancing” to keep the ill from spreading disease, the use of personal protective equipment such as masks, vaccination when available, and the use of hand hygiene should be used concurrently with antiviral medication to best mitigate this threat.

With the recent appearance of novel H1N1 influenza in Oregon, the deadline for applications has been extended to **June 24th, 2009**. Currently, novel H1N1 is sensitive to the antiviral medications available through this program, although this may change. While it is not certain, the extent of infection from novel H1N1 is expected to increase in Fall 2009.

There are two influenza medications available through this program: oseltamivir pills (Tamiflu®) and zanamivir (Relenza®), which is inhaled. These antiviral medicines have a proven effect in preventing infection by certain strains of seasonal influenza (prophylaxis), as well as a modest value in decreasing duration of illness, antibiotic use and hospitalization following infection (treatment). The actual value of using these medications for treatment or prevention of a future pandemic strain of influenza is unknown, although, as noted, the recent novel H1N1 strain currently appears to be sensitive to both medications.

CI/KR partners that meet state requirements (see below) may purchase antiviral medication on a federal contract through the Oregon Department of Human Services to (1) ensure treatment of ill employees during a pandemic and/or (2) ensure prophylaxis of critical employees. CI/KR is defined by the *Pandemic Influenza Preparedness, Response and Recovery Guide for Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources* (2006) as:

“Systems and assets, whether physical or virtual, so vital to the United States that the incapacity or destruction of such systems and assets would have a debilitating impact on security, national economic security, national public health or safety, or any combination of those matters.”

In addition to being identified as a CI/KR, organizations wishing to purchase antiviral medicines through the state must show that:

- (1) during a pandemic, disruption of their services would negatively affect the health and well-being of Oregon citizens;
- (2) they are able to meet the storage requirements (e.g., security and temperature control); and
- (3) they can provide medical oversight for the proper prescribing and tracking of the drugs.

“Assisting People to Become Independent, Healthy and Safe”
An Equal Opportunity Employer



Please consider whether or not your organization would like to order antiviral medicines through this program. To aid you in making the decision, the Public Health Division has established a website: <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/acd/flu/panflu.shtml> with information about antiviral medications, evidence regarding their potential effectiveness in combating pandemic influenza, and specific information about the antiviral purchasing program. After reviewing this information, if you have additional questions about this opportunity, please email your questions to us at stockpile.publichealth@state.or.us.

The deadline for receipt of applications from CI/KR organizations to purchase antiviral medicines through this program has been extended until 6/24/2009. In order to gain a better understanding of which organizations are interested in purchasing these medicines, we request that, if possible, you send an email to: stockpile.publichealth@state.or.us by June 15, 2009 if your organization is considering purchase of antiviral medication through this program.

Further details about the program, including application materials, are available on the State of Oregon's on-line purchasing system ORPIN (<http://orpin.oregon.gov>). Those new to ORPIN can call 503-378-4642, the orpin help number, to get help with log-in access and navigating around the site. You can then review the program documents, listed under "DHS-2819-09", complete the application in those materials and fax or mail the application to the address provided. All applications will be reviewed for their adherence to the above criteria and are subject to approval by the State of Oregon and Federal agencies.

When deciding whether or not to order, besides the criteria mentioned above, please also consider the following information:

Community-based mitigation measures (e.g., social distancing) will be as important as, or more important than antiviral prophylaxis to limit transmission of pandemic influenza.

Ongoing effectiveness of these drugs against novel H1N1, or their effectiveness against other future pandemic influenza strains cannot be guaranteed.

Tamiflu has a shelf life of 7 years; Relenza's shelf-life is 5 years; if a pandemic has not occurred within this time-frame, these drugs will need to be discarded.

Influenza antiviral medications are used for *treatment* – to treat people who are ill with influenza, or for *prophylaxis* - to prevent well people from getting ill from influenza. For antiviral prophylaxis, an individual must take one pill a day for the *entire duration of his/her exposure to influenza*, which could be 12 weeks or longer. Drug usage beyond the approved six weeks duration may require special FDA permission, including potentially administering the drugs under investigational new drug guidelines.

Agencies purchasing antiviral medications on this contract must abide by specific guidelines for use. (See materials at <http://orpin.oregon.gov>.)

Again, please feel free to contact us at stockpile.publichealth@state.or.us if you have questions about the program.

Sincerely,

Richard Leman
Public Health Emergency Preparedness Medical Epidemiologist
Oregon State Public Health Division
Department of Human Services