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For immediate release

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H1N1 FLU NOT THE ONLY CONCERN THIS YEAR

AURORA VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION OF WISCONSIN SHOO THE FLU & *PNEUMONIA TOO!* CLINICS RUN SEPT. 29 TO DEC. 5

Milwaukee, Wis. – Considerable attention has been paid in recent months to protecting people from the H1N1 flu. Yet there is another flu for which protection is just as critical. It's commonly called the seasonal flu.

The Aurora Visiting Nurse Association of Wisconsin Shoo The Flu & *Pneumonia Too!* vaccination clinics for the seasonal flu will begin Sept. 29 and run through Dec. 5. Hundreds of clinics will be held throughout eastern Wisconsin, with no appointment necessary.

“The national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is encouraging people to get vaccinated against seasonal influenza as soon as possible,” said Lisa Taylor, R.N., clinical coordinator for Aurora VNA. “The Aurora VNA Shoo the flu clinics will provide immunization only for the seasonal flu at this time.”

Taylor said this is a more challenging year because of the potential for people to get sick from both the H1N1 and seasonal flu. “While we don't know when the H1N1 vaccine will be available, the seasonal flu vaccine has been delivered, and we can start protecting people from the seasonal flu now.”

The H1N1 vaccine is still being developed and not expected to be available until mid- to late October. When it becomes available, the H1N1 vaccine is intended to be administered in addition to the seasonal flu vaccine.

“A flu shot is the most effective way to protect yourself from seasonal flu and its potentially dangerous complications. We simply don't know yet what will occur with the H1N1 virus, but we do know that nationally, more than 36,000 deaths and 200,000 hospitalizations are caused yearly by seasonal flu,” Taylor said.

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Flu clinics / Add one

“It’s important not just for people who have weakened immune systems to be vaccinated for seasonal flu, but for their loved ones as well,” Taylor said. “So if a member of your family is in the hospital or nursing home, or has a chronic disease like asthma or diabetes, it’s critical for you to be immunized.”

One misconception people often have is that they will get the flu from an influenza shot.

“There is no way that you can contract influenza by being immunized, because the vaccine uses inactive or ‘killed’ viruses,” Taylor said. “Influenza is a respiratory disease, which some people confuse with the stomach flu, which is a gastrointestinal ailment.”

The Aurora VNA will hold more than 400 public flu clinics in 20 counties throughout eastern Wisconsin this year. The state’s leading agency for flu clinics expects to receive its full supply of seasonal flu vaccine. Since flu strains change from year to year, it is necessary to be vaccinated annually.

“Last year, we reached more than 80,000 people through our community flu clinics,” Taylor said. “We know there are many more people who ought to be protected from the seasonal flu, and we hope they take advantage of this year’s clinics.”

For more information about Shoo The Flu clinics, please go to www.Aurora.org/flu or call 1-800-548-7580.

Medicare Part B and Medicaid cover the cost of flu and pneumonia vaccinations. For people not on Medicare or Medicaid, flu shots are \$30; pneumonia shots are \$45.

The CDC recommends that parents ensure that children under the age of 18 receive a seasonal flu vaccination. Aurora VNA clinics provide immunizations to people age 9 and older. Children from 9 to age 18 must be accompanied by a guardian who can sign the consent form for the immunization.

The full CDC guidelines include:

- Anyone who wants to reduce his/her chance of catching influenza or spreading influenza to others
- Anyone 50 years of age or older
- Children from 6 months to 18 years old
- Women who will be pregnant during flu season
- Anyone with long-term health problems
- Anyone with a weakened immune system
- Anyone with muscle or nerve disorders that can lead to breathing or swallowing problems
- Residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities

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Flu clinics / Add two

- Health care providers
- Anyone who lives with or cares for children from birth to five years of age
- Anyone who lives with or cares for people 50 years and older or anyone with medical conditions that put them at risk for severe complications from influenza
- People who are at risk of serious complications from influenza
- People who provide essential community services
- People who live in residence halls or other crowded conditions
- People who travel to the Southern hemisphere between April and September or in organized tourist groups at any time

Pneumonia vaccinations also are available at the clinics. A pneumonia shot is recommended for those 65 or older, under 65 with chronic health conditions such as diabetes or heart or lung diseases, or under 65 and have asthma or smoke cigarettes. Usually, one dose of pneumococcal vaccine is recommended per lifetime. Certain individuals may benefit from an additional dose.

Shoo the Flu clinics in Kenosha County:

Aurora Medical Center	10400 75th St.	Kenosha	53142	10/7/2009	10 AM - 2 PM
Aurora Pharmacy	25320 75th St.	Paddock Lake	53168	10/21/2009	10 AM - 2 PM
Lord of Life Lutheran Church	5601 Washington Rd	Kenosha	53142	10/29/2009	3 PM - 7 PM
Aurora Pharmacy	700 N Lake St.	Twin Lakes	53181	10/31/2009	10 AM - 2 PM
St. Mary's Lutheran Church	2001 80th Street	Kenosha	53143	11/11/2009	3 PM - 7 PM
Aurora Medical Center	10400 75th St.	Kenosha	53142	11/16/2009	10 AM - 2 PM

Flu shots also are available through Aurora and Aurora Advanced physician offices, Aurora QuickCare™, and Aurora Pharmacy sites across eastern Wisconsin. To find those nearest you, go www.aurora.org.

The Aurora VNA is a not-for-profit agency that has been committed to keeping people independent in their homes since 1907 and is the most comprehensive source of home care services in eastern Wisconsin. The VNA is part of Aurora Health Care, a not-for-profit health care provider and a national leader in efforts to improve the quality of health care.

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