

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: October 23, 2007

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**HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND HURON VALLEY AMBULANCE TO
CONDUCT UNIQUE FLU SHOT DISPENSING EXERCISE**

Public Urged to Participate in Testing County's Emergency Preparedness Plan

YPSILANTI, Mich., October 23, 2007—The emergency preparedness planning scenario is challenging, but realistic: A sudden public health emergency requires that a large number of residents be vaccinated against an unspecified health threat as quickly as possible. The Health Department and its healthcare partners must immediately set up mobile immunization clinics to ensure they can rapidly vaccinate large numbers of residents. Will the County's emergency preparedness plan be flexible enough to support such alternate methods of dispensing vaccine?

That's the question before health officials at the Washtenaw County Public Health Department and Huron Valley Ambulance (HVA), who will partner together in early November to exercise the mass dispensing component of the County's emergency preparedness plan. Health Department nurses and HVA paramedics will dispense flu shots at two, high-volume mobile flu clinics on November 7 and 8. Members of the public and all Washtenaw County employees are encouraged to attend. Vaccinations at both sites will be administered from heated ambulances and large heated tents.

"As part of our Emergency Preparedness and Pandemic Influenza grant requirements, we're obligated to exercise various components of our plan on a yearly basis," said Cindra James, Public Health Preparedness Coordinator for the Washtenaw County Public Health Department. "Last year we exercised our plans by testing how many people we could move through a clinic in a given timeframe, from registration to exit," James said. "The goal of this year's exercise is to test an alternate method of providing vaccination, or 'prophylaxis' to members of our community. Our secondary goal this year is to see how many people will download the vaccination form from our website and fill it out prior to coming to the clinic."

Joyce Williams, Public Affairs Manager for HVA, encouraged members of the public to attend the events.

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WEB ADDRESSES: <http://www.ewashtenaw.org>

<http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org>



“We’re encouraged by the abundant supply and ready availability of flu vaccine this year, well before the peak of the flu season in Michigan,” Williams said. “Many people are under the mistaken impression that if they don’t get their flu shot during September or October it’s not worth getting—that it somehow won’t be effective. Nothing could be further from the truth. A flu vaccination protects you throughout the season even if you wait until December, January or beyond. Everyone should consider visiting one of these two clinics if they still need a flu shot.”

For additional information about flu shots or to make an appointment for a flu shot at the Washtenaw County Public Health Department, please call (734) 544-6770 or visit the Health Department website at: http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/public_health/ph_fluclinics.html.

Washtenaw County Public Health Department/HVA Flu Clinic # 1

DATE: Wednesday, November 7, 2007

LOCATION: Western Washtenaw County Service Center Parking Lot
705 N. Zeeb Road
Scio Township
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Washtenaw County Public Health Department/HVA Flu Clinic # 2

DATE: Thursday, November 8, 2007

LOCATION: Washtenaw Community College—Morris J. Lawrence Building Parking Lot
4800 E. Huron River Drive
Ann Arbor
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

General Information For Both Flu Clinics

- No appointments are necessary at either clinic.
- Flu shots are available for anyone aged 6 months and older.
- Children 8 years and younger may need 2 doses of flu vaccine this year.
- The Health Department will bill for Medicare Part B (participants must bring their Medicare card and driver’s license or other ID) and Medicaid recipients.
- The quantity of preservative-free injectable flu shots is limited and will be available only while supplies last.
- Please dress appropriately for early November weather and wear outerwear that you can quickly and easily remove for a vaccination.

COST:	\$20.00	Flu Shot—General Public
	FREE	Flu Shot—Washtenaw County employees (with County ID)
	\$25.00	Preservative-free Injectable Flu Shot (Ages 3 and up)—General Public
	FREE	Preservative-free Injectable Flu Shot (Ages 3 and up)—Washtenaw County employees (with County ID)

FORMS: For faster service, download and complete the **Immunization Consent form** before you arrive and bring it with you to the clinic:

http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/public_health/phcontent/07_flu_form.pdf

MORE INFO: For a fact sheet about flu shots and the flu from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), please visit:

http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/public_health/phcontent/flu_vis_07-08.pdf

Huron Valley Ambulance (HVA)

Based in Ann Arbor, Huron Valley Ambulance is a nationally accredited, nonprofit community ambulance service covering Washtenaw, western Wayne and southwest Oakland counties. In 2006, HVA celebrated its 25th anniversary. Learn more about HVA at www.hva.org.

Washtenaw County Public Health Department

The Washtenaw County Public Health Department works locally to prevent disease, promote health, prolong life, and protect communities. One of 45 Local Health Departments in Michigan, the Washtenaw County Public Health Department shares a two-century-old national public mission to enhance sanitary conditions, protect the environment, prevent and control disease, and promote healthy lifestyles—objectives that have resulted in improved quality of life and increased life expectancy for our nation’s citizens. During 2008, the Washtenaw County Public Health Department will be placing a special focus on promoting social justice by reducing inequalities affecting the health of all in Washtenaw County. Learn more about the Health Department at www.ewashtenaw.org.

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