

Minutes of the special meeting of the Quality and Patient Safety Committee of the Board of Directors of the Cook County Health and Hospitals System held Tuesday, October 13, 2009 at the hour of 10:15 A.M. at John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County, 1901 W. Harrison Street, in the fifth floor conference room, Chicago, Illinois.

**I. Attendance/Call to Order**

Chairman Ansell called the meeting to order at 10:20 A.M.

Present: Chairman David Ansell, MD, MPH and Director Luis Muñoz, MD, MPH (2)

Director Benn Greenspan, PhD, MPH, FACHE

Absent: Director Hon. Jerry Butler (1)

Additional attendees and/or presenters were:

William T. Foley

Stephen Martin, PhD, MPH

John Raba, MD

Elizabeth Reidy

Deborah Santana

Anthony J. Tedeschi, MD, MPH, MBA

Sharon Welbel, MD

**II. Public Speakers**

Chairman Ansell asked the Secretary to call upon the registered speakers.

The Secretary called upon the following registered public speaker:

1. Leslie Curtis Midwest Director, National Nurses Organizing Committee

**III. Recommendations, Discussion/Information Items**

**A. Proposed Policy on Health System Personnel Influenza Vaccination Requirements**

Dr. Stephen Martin presented two draft recommendations on the Health System Personnel Influenza Requirements. Draft "A" is recommended for approval at this time. He summarized the differences between Draft "A" and Draft "B"; the only exemption for Draft "A" is for medical contraindications, while Draft "B" exemptions include the recognition of medical contraindications, along with other reasons as established by Employee Health Services.

Mr. Foley added that after extensive review and discussions on the subject, it was his recommendation that the Committee approve Draft "A". He stated that the Cook County Health and Hospitals System should be a leader on this issue, as it is the third largest health system in the nation. Additionally, he stated that it is the right thing to do to protect the System's staff, patients, and the public.

Director Muñoz suggested that a tracking mechanism be put in place to track exempted employees, and to track those employees who receive the vaccination but still contract influenza.

In response to Director Greenspan's inquiry regarding which other vaccinations are required for System employees, Dr. Sharon Welbel stated that the System requires from its employees proof of vaccination against rubella. She added that this is a state mandate.

**III. Recommendations, Discussion/Information Items**

**A. Proposed Policy on Health System Personnel Influenza Vaccination Requirements (continued)**

Further discussion took place on the System's vaccination rates. Dr. Welbel stated that the System's vaccination rate is approximately 40% for the voluntary seasonal influenza vaccine.

Director Greenspan noted that, if it hasn't already been done, a communications plan should be prepared to educate the unions and all employees on the subject.

Director Muñoz, seconded by Chairman Ansell, moved the approval of Draft "A" of the Proposed Recommendation on Cook County Health and Hospitals System Personnel Influenza Vaccination Requirements. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

(Draft "A" of the Proposed Recommendation on Cook County Health and Hospitals System Personnel Influenza Vaccination Requirements is included as Attachment #1.)

**IV. Action Items**

**A. Any item listed under Section III**

**V. Adjourn**

Director Muñoz, seconded by Chairman Ansell, moved to adjourn. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Quality and Patient Safety Committee of the  
Board of Directors of the  
Cook County Health and Hospitals System

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
David Ansell, MD, MPH, Chairman

Attest:

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
Deborah Santana, Secretary

Cook County Health and Hospitals System  
Minutes of the Quality and Patient Safety Committee Special Meeting  
October 13, 2009

ATTACHMENT #1

**DRAFT A: EXEMPTION FOR MEDICAL CONTRAINDICATION ONLY**

**Cook County Health & Hospitals System  
Quality and Patient Safety Committee  
SUBSTITUTE RECOMMENDATION**

**Date:** 10/13/09

**Subject:** Health Care Personnel Influenza Vaccination Requirements

**Background:** The current pandemic of novel Influenza A (H1N1) has highlighted the importance of vaccinating personnel working in health care against influenza. Seasonal Influenza alone causes approximately 38,000 deaths annually in the United States. Influenza is easily acquired by anyone – whether at work or in the community – but influenza acquired by Health Care Personnel may be spread to patients, visitors, other Personnel and families. Vaccination is an important tool both to reduce illness among Personnel, assuring that we have enough staff to care for patients, and to reduce the spread of Influenza to patients and others.

**Purpose:** To protect health by preventing Personnel from transmitting influenza to patients, visitors and other Personnel, to protect Personnel and their families from influenza and to assure the availability of Personnel to provide quality health services.

**Recommendation:** That Influenza vaccination be required for all medical and non-medical Personnel working in System facilities who have not been granted an exemption from this requirement, through the adoption of a System Policy pursuant to the authority vested in the Cook County Health and Hospitals System Board of Directors; which policy shall be effective immediately, shall be placed into an appropriate Policy format by the System HR Director and shall replace the provisions of any existing employee health policies to the extent they may be inconsistent.

**COOK COUNTY HEALTH AND HOSPITALS SYSTEM  
PERSONNEL INFLUENZA VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS**

**1. Definitions**

(a) “Medically contraindicated” means a determination, certified by a physician or nurse practitioner licensed to practice in the State of Illinois, that influenza vaccine(s) should not be administered to an individual because it would be detrimental to the individual’s health. Medical contraindication shall continue until such immunization is found no longer to be detrimental to the individual’s health.

(b) “Personnel” means all persons who are employed or engaged in the provision of services, research or educational activity, within a System facility, whether paid or unpaid, including, but not limited to, employees, members of the medical staff, contractors and contractor staff, residents, students, and volunteers, who either have direct contact with patients or whose activities are such that if they were infected with influenza, they could potentially expose patients, co-workers, or others who have direct contact with patients to influenza, except for Exempt Personnel.

(c) “Exempt Personnel” means Personnel whose positions have been identified by Employee Health Services as being exempt from, or who have applied to Employee Health Services and been granted an exemption from, required influenza vaccination.

## **2. Health & Hospitals System – Personnel Influenza Immunization Requirements**

With the exception of Exempt Personnel, all Personnel shall be required to be immunized against influenza virus(es) as a precondition to being permitted to provide services or engage in research or educational activities in a System facility by December 1, 2009 and November 1st each year thereafter and in circumstances of a threatened or actual pandemic of influenza for which vaccine is available. Such influenza vaccination(s) must be in accordance with the national recommendations in effect at the time of vaccination(s). Requirements applicable to additional influenza vaccines that are not included in the regular seasonal influenza vaccine, and the deadlines for receiving such vaccines or requesting an exemption, shall be established by the Chair of the Division of Infectious Diseases at Stroger Hospital in consultation with the Chair of the Division of Microbiology at Stroger Hospital and System Employee Health Services. If the System determines that vaccine supplies are inadequate given the numbers of Personnel to be vaccinated or that vaccine(s) are not reasonably available, the System may suspend the requirement(s) of this policy for some or all Personnel and/or change the annual deadline for such vaccination(s).

## **3. Health & Hospitals System, Existing Personnel**

The System will provide or arrange for influenza vaccination(s), at no cost to Personnel, either at System facilities or elsewhere. Personnel may choose to receive influenza vaccination(s) at their own expense from a source other than that arranged for by the System, in which case they shall provide documentation of vaccination(s) to Employee Health Services by November 30<sup>th</sup> each year as provided in Section 5, below.

## **4. Health & Hospitals System, New Personnel**

Influenza vaccination requirements, including timelines for submitting an exemption request, for Personnel who begin service, research or educational activity in a System facility after November 30<sup>th</sup> but before the following April 1st shall be determined by Employee Health Services. If vaccination is required, the System will provide or arrange for the necessary vaccination(s) at its cost. New Personnel may choose to receive influenza vaccination(s) from a source other than that arranged for by the System, in which case they shall provide documentation of vaccination to Employee Health Services by a date determined by Employee Health Services and as provided in Section 5, below.

## **5. Documentation of Vaccination**

Influenza vaccination(s) of Personnel shall be documented by Employee Health Services. Documentation shall include the date, site of administration, type of vaccine, dose, manufacturer and lot number of the vaccine, reactions if any, confirmation that the vaccine information statement was provided and the name of the person administering the vaccine(s). Personnel who choose to receive influenza vaccination(s) from a source other than that arranged for by the

System shall provide documentation of the date, type of vaccine, dose and name of the person administering the vaccine to Employee Health Services.

Employee Health Services shall inform the respective Chief Operating Officer regarding the names of Personnel who have not complied with this Policy. The Chief Operating Officer shall communicate the information to the respective managers for appropriate action. During the initial implementation of this policy in Fall 2009, this provision may be limited to compliance with vaccination requirements for Influenza A (H1N1).

## **6. Exemption from Vaccination Requirements**

Employee Health Services may determine that certain Personnel shall be exempt from the vaccination requirements in this Policy.

- A. In 2009, individual Personnel wishing to be exempted from the vaccination requirement must submit a written request for exemption on the basis of a recognized medical contraindication in accordance with procedures established by Employee Health Services. Requests for exemptions must be submitted to Employee Health Services by December 1, 2009.
- B. Beginning in 2010 and each year thereafter, individual Personnel shall be responsible for submitting a written request for exemption on the basis of a recognized medical contraindication in accordance with procedures established by Employee Health Services. Requests for exemptions must be submitted to Employee Health Services by November 1<sup>st</sup> of each year for the seasonal influenza vaccine released that year.

All Personnel except Exempt Personnel must comply with the vaccination requirements of this Policy, and all Exempt Personnel must comply with any conditions imposed by Employee Health Services as addressed in Section 8, below. Non-compliance may result in exclusion from System facilities or disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## **7. EMPLOYEE HEALTH SERVICES EXEMPTION REQUEST PROCEDURES**

Personnel requesting an exemption must submit a written request for exemption on the basis of a recognized medical contraindication in accordance with procedures established by Employee Health Services each year. These procedures may include, but shall not be limited to, submission of a physician certification identifying that one or more recognized medical contraindications apply with respect to immunization of the individual.

Personnel will be notified in writing of whether the medical exemption is granted each year. The basis for granting an exemption is subject to change depending upon the anticipated severity of an influenza outbreak.

## **8. Restrictions on Exempt Personnel**

Exempt (non-vaccinated) Personnel shall comply with conditions established by Employee Health Services to reduce the risk of transmitting influenza to patients, visitors and other

Personnel. These conditions may include, but shall not be limited to, a requirement that Exempt Personnel wear a face mask in patient areas and/or throughout the campus in the event of a widespread outbreak.

## **9. Reporting Requirements**

Employee Health Services shall collect aggregate data on Personnel influenza vaccination status for the period beginning each April 1<sup>st</sup> and ending the following March 31<sup>st</sup> and shall report that data to the Quality and Patient Safety Committee of the System Board within thirty days of the applicable period. Reported data will include, but not be limited to, number of Personnel immunized, by Personnel category, number of Personnel not immunized, by Personnel category, and reason(s) Personnel did not receive vaccine.

## **10. Compliance with Policy**

Failure to comply with the requirements set forth in this Policy, including any conditions imposed upon Exempt Personnel, may result in exclusion from System facilities or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **11. Effective Date:** October 13, 2009