Dear Chief Executive Officer:

The purpose of this letter is to remind you of the requirements for offering influenza vaccination to parents and anticipated caregivers of neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) patients and to each admitted person age sixty-five years or older.

**Requirement in NICUs:**

New York State Public Health Law (PHL) section 2805-h requires all general hospitals with NICUs to offer influenza vaccination annually, between September 1 and April 1, to all persons who are parents or who are reasonably anticipated to be caregivers in the households of newborns being treated in NICUs.

Influenza vaccination is not licensed for children aged less than six months, and antiviral medications are not licensed for use in infants less than 12 months of age. Therefore, protection of young infants, who have hospitalization rates similar to those observed among the elderly, depends on vaccination of infants’ close contacts.

**Requirement for admitted persons age sixty-five years or older:**

PHL 2805-h also contains a requirement that the administrative officer, or other person in charge of each general hospital, must ensure that influenza vaccine is offered to each admitted person aged 65 years or older. The requirement, effective since 2006, applies to all patients admitted between September 1 and April 1.

*We strongly encourage you to continue in your vaccination efforts against influenza even after the April 1 date required by law - and plan for the 2015-2016 season.* Please review your influenza vaccine purchasing options and assess the needs of your practice or organization.

Hospitals must take steps to adopt and implement both policies as required under the law. Should you need further assistance, please call the New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Immunization at (518) 473-4437.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Guthrie S. Birkhead, M.D., M.P.H.
Deputy Commissioner
Office of Public Health