March 21, 2019

Dear Hospital Administrator:

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) Healthcare Personnel Influenza Vaccination Report will open in the Health Electronic Response Data System (HERDS) Thursday, March 21, 2019 and must be electronically submitted to the NYSDOH by May 1, 2019. All facilities covered under New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, Title 10, Section 2.59 (10 NYCRR 2.59) are required to report the number and percentage of personnel vaccinated against influenza for the current season upon request of the NYSDOH.

NYS hospitals have two options to satisfy these reporting requirements. You are only required to report using one of these options.

   OR
2. Submit the NYSDOH’s Healthcare Personnel Influenza Vaccination Report via the HERDS.

For hospitals that choose to meet their influenza vaccination reporting requirements using NHSN, there are two important changes implemented in the 2018-19 influenza season that you need to be aware of.

1. Hospitals will need to sign up for the “NYSDOH Flu Group” in NHSN. This will allow the NYSDOH to access the information submitted via NHSN. Otherwise, your NHSN report will not be accessible to the NYSDOH and will not satisfy NYS reporting requirements. Information on how to join the NYSDOH Flu Group is available in the HCP Influenza Vaccination Report: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) available online at www.health.ny.gov/FluMaskReg.

2. CMS no longer requires hospitals to report HCP influenza vaccination data for inpatient psychiatric facilities to NHSN. However, this data is still required to meet NYS reporting requirements. Hospitals can still choose to voluntarily report this data to NHSN. Any hospitals with inpatient psychiatric facilities that do not report this data to NHSN will need to submit the data via the HERDS Healthcare Personnel Influenza Vaccination Report.

Hospitals that do not submit the Healthcare Personnel Influenza Vaccination Summary to the NHSN, or that do not include data for their inpatient psychiatric facilities in their NHSN report, will be required to complete and submit the annual Healthcare Personnel Influenza Vaccination Report on HERDS at https://commerce.health.state.ny.us/. HERDS Healthcare Personnel Influenza Vaccination Report instructions, FAQs, and a pre-recorded webinar training session are available online at www.health.ny.gov/FluMaskReg. If your hospital does not report HCP influenza vaccination data to the NHSN, then please ensure that the person completing the HERDS report at your hospital views the pre-recorded webinar and reviews all instructions and FAQs before completing the report.

For questions about reporting to NHSN, please contact: nhsn@cdc.gov and specify “HPS Flu Summary” along with your facility type in the subject line of the e-mail. Questions about joining
the NYS Flu Group in NHSN should be directed to the NYSDOH Bureau of Healthcare-Associated Infections at (518) 474-1142. Questions about the HERDS Healthcare Personnel Influenza Vaccination Report should be directed to the NYSDOH Bureau of Immunization at either (518) 473-4437 or immunize@health.ny.gov. Technical questions about the report or on the use of HERDS should be directed to the Health Emergency Preparedness Program at (518) 408-5163 or hseppny@health.ny.gov. Questions about 10 NYCRR Section 2.59 (the “flu mask” regulation) should be directed to flumaskreg@health.ny.gov. Further information regarding 10 NYCRR Section 2.59 is also available on the NYSDOH website at www.health.ny.gov/FluMaskReg.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Rausch-Phung, M.D., M.P.H.
Director, Bureau of Immunization

Enclosures