

ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

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Demand for School Vaccine Less Than Anticipated

Reports of Flu-like Illness on the decline – One additional Death Confirmed

As the Oneida County School Mass Immunization Program enters its third week, the demand for the H1N1 vaccine has been less than anticipated, health department officials said today. Additionally, reports of flu-like illness throughout Oneida County and absenteeism rates in area schools are on the decline.

There can be several possible explanations for the response to date,” said Dr. Daniel Gilmore, Acting Director of the Oneida County Health Department. Gilmore continued, *“Some people might feel the threat has passed since reported cases of flu-like illness in Oneida County and throughout the nation are on the decline. Some students may have already gotten the vaccine from their primary care provider or at one of our scheduled clinics. Others might be among that group of individuals that just doesn’t feel the vaccine is necessary or safe.”*

Gilmore said about 30-per cent of the registered students in three districts, including Holland Patent, Adirondack and Rome Catholic received the H1N1 vaccine. The first district where the program was held, Remsen Central Schools, saw about 40-percent of the 505 students in that district vaccinated.

The Camden School District is the fifth district to have vaccination program and is the site of this week’s activities. With nearly 25-hundred students enrolled, the program will run for four consecutive days through December 10th.

While Gilmore said it’s encouraging to see the decline in new cases of H1N1 influenza at the present time, some health officials predict a resurgence of the illness after the holiday period or early next year. He urged those at risk to get the vaccine when it’s available.

Officials also confirmed the county’s 8th fatality related to the H1N1 influenza. The virus has been confirmed in the case of an adult Oneida County resident with an underlying medical condition who expired within the past 15 days, according to Gilmore.

More information on H1N1 influenza and a list of immunization clinics can be found on the health department’s web site at ocgov.net or by calling the flu ‘Hotline’ at 798-3600

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