



The Vita Viewpoint Important Information for Decision Makers

Don't Look Now – But Here Comes Flu Season!

Overview

Whether it's H1N1, or some other strain of flu, it is certain that employees are concerned about both the effects of the "regular flu" and the potential for a global flu pandemic. The purpose of this Vita Viewpoint is to provide an overview of the current status of flu incidence and flu vaccine shots.

Why It Matters

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the normally "quiet" summer season has seen a higher than normal incidence of flu reported nationwide. Over 98% of the flu viruses reported to CDC were H1N1 variants (for example, swine flu). This higher than normal incidence of flu in the off-season is cause for concern within the medical community. Click [here](#) for the latest nationwide information on the CDC website.

In response, the CDC is strongly urging all citizens to take advantage of flu shots offered in their communities. This creates an opportunity for employers to provide a convenient and cost effective source for this important service. Offering flu shots to your employees will:

- Demonstrate concern for your employees' well-being
- Help contain the spread of illness in your business and community
- Most importantly – reduce absenteeism and disruption of your business

What You Can Do

While H1N1 "swine" flu has gotten all of the press, the vaccine for this specific strain is not yet available commercially. The vaccine cocktail for the coming year's expected "seasonal" flu has already been formulated, and vendors are setting up appointments for distribution in medical and retail locations. It is expected that the novel H1N1 vaccine will become available in late October, early November and will be distributed and administered *separately* from the regular seasonal vaccine.

Vendors can be contracted to visit your worksite – with your choice of cost sharing strategy – and some vendors also provide vouchers that can be used at local pharmacies and community centers. If you are interested in exploring an on-site or voucher service, Vita will be happy to provide you with a list of available resources. Reservations for flu vaccines fill up quickly every year, so please let your Account Executive know soon if you would like to review the vendor list.

***For questions or additional information, please contact
Vita Benefits Group at (650) 968-8811.***