



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**News Release**

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GOVERNOR

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**HEALTHCARE COMMUNITY COLLABORATES ON VACCINE SHORTAGE**

HONOLULU - The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) and medical, insurance, and long-term care organizations are working together to determine how to best allocate Hawaii's limited supply of flu vaccine this year.

DOH is currently working with the medical community to assess vaccine inventory and availability. A collaborative plan is expected within the next few days.

"We realize that this is a tough situation, for the public and many providers, because there simply is not enough vaccine for everyone who wants it," said Sarah Park, M.D., Disease Outbreak and Control Division, DOH. "Working with the healthcare community, we hope to help protect those individuals who are at the highest risk of serious complications from the flu."

DOH officials expect to have recommendations for Hawaii doctors and their patients by early next week. Establishing priority groups help healthcare providers make the best use of the limited vaccine supply. They also help the public understand how and why flu shots will be given.

"We are pleased that the Hawaii medical community has been so supportive of these efforts," said Linda Rosen, M.D., Deputy Director, Hawaii State Department of Health. "We are hopeful

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that healthy Hawaii residents will demonstrate the same concern and commitment to their community and forgo their flu shot this year so those most vulnerable can be protected.”

While vaccination is the best protection against the flu, there are still other ways to protect yourself and your family:

- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
- Staying home when you are sick.
- Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Washing your hands.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Touching something contaminated with germs (doorknob, phone or faucet) and then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth can spread infection.

For additional information on flu and the availability flu vaccine call 2-1-1 or visit [www.vaxhawaii.com](http://www.vaxhawaii.com).

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