



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**News Release**

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GOVERNOR

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**DOH RECEIVES IMMUNIZATION EXCELLENCE AWARD**

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) has received a national award for its efforts to protect the health of Hawai'i's children through a statewide school immunization program. The National Influenza Vaccine Summit (NIVS) announced Hawai'i as the winner of the Immunization Excellence Award for Overall 2007-2008 Season Activity. The award recognizing the state's extraordinary contributions towards improving adult and/or childhood influenza vaccination rates within the community.

"We are very pleased to receive this award, especially as we are in the midst of planning and seeking funds to continue this vital program in the coming year," said Director of Health Chiyome Fukino, M.D. "It's an honor to be recognized by a national entity that includes healthcare professionals at the forefront of addressing and resolving influenza and influenza vaccine issues. "

DOH was the first in the nation to implement a statewide, school-based influenza immunization program, "*Protect Hawai'i's Keiki: Stop Flu at School.*" The program extended from October 2007 – January 2008 and provided influenza vaccinations at no charge to over 60,000 elementary and middle school students in about 340 public and private schools throughout the state. Over 9,000 school faculty and staff were also vaccinated.

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“The success of this program was due to collaboration between the state, healthcare providers, educators, and of course, the participation of Hawai`i’s students, parents and guardians,” said State Epidemiologist Paul Effler, M.D. “Special thanks go to Dr. Marci Nagao and Dr. Carl Chu, for their pivotal roles in all aspects of the program’s execution, including coordinating with all of our partners in their outstanding efforts.”

The National Influenza Vaccine Summit started in the year 2000, and is co-sponsored by the American Medical Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Awards will be presented at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Immunization Conference on March 17, 2008, in Atlanta, Georgia.

More information about the DOH Hawai`i Immunization Program is available at:

<http://hawaii.gov/health/family-child-health/immunization/general/index.html>

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