

The novel H1N1 influenza virus first appeared in suburban Cook County last Spring and has caused mild to severe illness resulting in hospitalization in both children and adults. However, children do not possess immunity to the virus and are considered at high risk for infection. As the U.S. enters its flu season the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is concerned that the H1N1 virus may cause more illness and that it may be more severe. The CDC has recommended that children and young people 6 months through 24 years of age receive the H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available. Vaccination is the best way to protect children from this potentially serious virus.

Locally, Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) officials are preparing to implement a voluntary, school-based vaccination campaign in our community and they need help from licensed healthcare providers.

CCDPH is the state certified public health agency for suburban Cook County with the exception of Evanston, Skokie, Oak Park, and Stickney Township. Currently CCDPH is recruiting volunteers for the Cook County Medical Reserve Corps, an organized group of medical, non-medical and public health professionals willing to assist CCDPH during public health emergencies.

“We are about to undertake the massive task of vaccinating a large number of suburban Cook County school-aged children with the H1N1 vaccine and we cannot do it alone,” said CCDPH chief operating officer, Stephen A. Martin, Jr., Ph.D., M.P.H. “We need all licensed providers, as well as nurses and other healthcare workers to register with our Cook County Medical Reserve Corp to volunteer to vaccinate school children in suburban Cook County in the coming months.”

Please consider lending your skills and expertise to this very important community effort by volunteering with the Cook County Department of Public Health.

For more information and to register contact CCDPH:

Visit: www.cookcountypublichealth.org

Call: Jeannette Tandez, Volunteer Coordinator at 708-492-2820

Email: volunteer@ccdph.net