

Winter 2009—2010

## A Flu Season to Remember!

So much has happened since the first reports of a new flu strain surfaced during the Spring of 2009. The first confirmed cases of swine flu in the United States were reported by the California and Texas Departments of Health. In Bucks County the planning started early for the response H1N1 mass community vaccination.

On November 5, 2009, Dr. Damsker announced plans to immunize students throughout Bucks County with the H1N1 vaccine. The Bucks County plan targeted the student population because the PA Department of Health had reported that 60 percent of H1N1 cases were being seen in school

age students 5-19. The implementation plan was coordinated with all 13 school districts in Bucks County. Between November 10 and 24, 15 clinics were held to provide H1N1 vaccinations to school aged children.

Three clinics were held in December to continue the vaccination efforts, offering the H1N1 vaccine to those in the CDC priority groups. In addition to school aged children, the CDC priority groups included pregnant women, household contacts and caregivers for children younger than 6 months of age, healthcare and emergency medical services personnel, all people from 6 months through 24 years of age, and persons aged 25

through 64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of medical complications from influenza. Three additional clinics were held in January 2010 to complete the County's H1N1 mass vaccination efforts, offering the H1N1 vaccine to the general public.

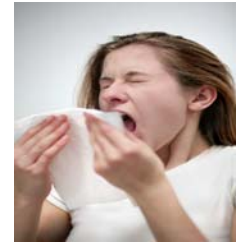
These H1N1 mass vaccination clinics were a coordinated effort between the Health Department, law enforcement officers of the Major Incident Response Team (MIRT), volunteers with the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), and the staff of the Emergency Management Agency (EMA). In all, the dedicated efforts of all involved staff and volunteers resulted in the successful completion of 21



H1N1 mass vaccination clinics and the administration of more than 67,000 H1N1 vaccines between November 2009 and January 2010. The County Commissioners awarded Commendations to the Health Department, MIRT, MRC, and EMA on January 20, 2010 for their collaborative efforts to protect the residents of Bucks County against the H1N1 influenza.



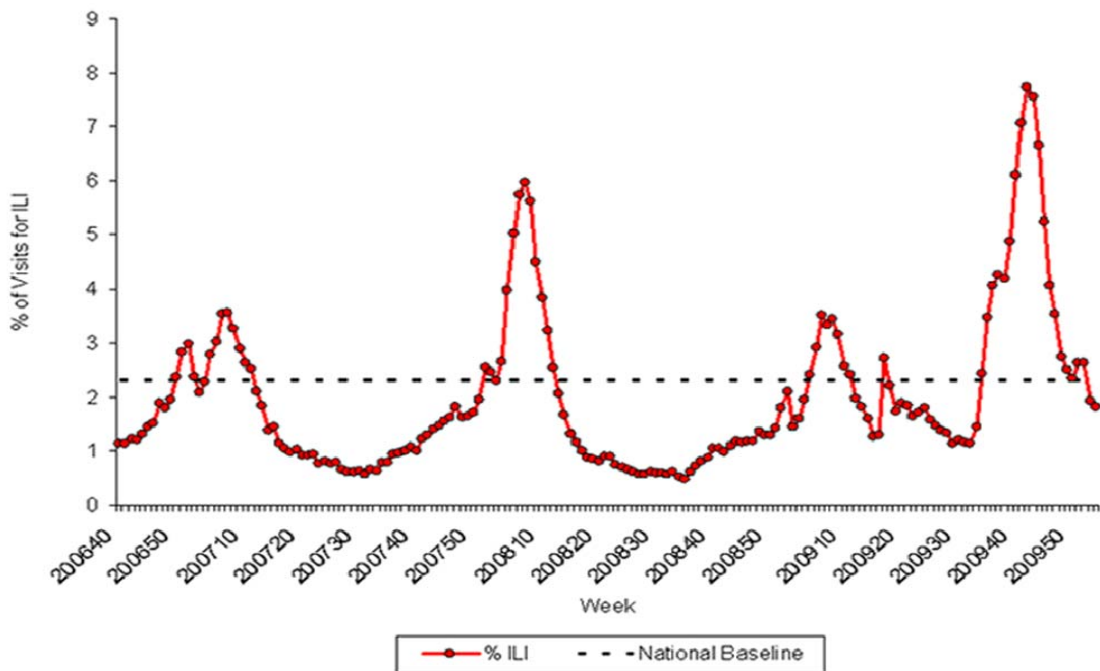
Pennsbury H1N1 flu clinic, November 12th.



## Do Not Let Your Guard Down

As of this writing, the number of confirmed cases of H1N1 flu and physician office visits for flu-like symptoms has gone down substantially. While we hope that the numbers will not reach those seen in the Fall of 2009 (see chart), on January 7<sup>th</sup> of this year officials at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a number of warnings. First, the H1N1 virus is still circulating and widespread activity is currently seen in Delaware, New Jersey, Maine and Virginia. Second, the beginning of the year often brings another wave of influenza. While it appears that the public's response to nationwide prevention efforts may have helped prevent a repeat of the 1957 pandemic flu death rates, it is too early to celebrate and the future remains uncertain. The Bucks County Health Department as well as many health care providers have the H1N1 vaccine. If you can, help protect yourself and your family. **Bee Wise. Bee Immunized.**

(Percentage of Visits for Influenza-like Illness (ILI) Reported by the U.S. Outpatient Influenza-like Illness Surveillance Network (ILINet), National Summary 2008-2009 and Previous Two Seasons)



(From: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/updates/us/#iligraph>)

**The H1N1 vaccine is still available at each of the Bucks County Health Department offices. Please call for more information on dates and times of clinics:**  
**Doylestown office: 215-345-3344**  
**Quakertown office: 215-529-7000**  
**Levittown office: 215-949-5805**

## Some Sample Responses to H1N1 Mass Vaccination

As observed in a "Thumbs Up" Editorial in the *Bucks County Courier Times* newspaper in response to the first swine flu clinic held at Harry S. Truman High School, Bristol Township, Bucks County on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

Over 2,000 students received their H1N1 vaccine.

"From the police directing traffic, to the orange- and green-vested health and law enforcement personnel efficiently leading parents and children to the proper lines, to the hoard of nurses lined up at tables waving their hands in the air to indicate they were ready for the next child, we were back in our car quicker than my average trip to the grocery store. A job well done." ([http://www.phillyburbs.com/opinions/opinion\\_details/article/454/2009/november/20/thumbs-up-73.html](http://www.phillyburbs.com/opinions/opinion_details/article/454/2009/november/20/thumbs-up-73.html))



**THANK YOU!!!!** I recently took my two daughters (ages 10 & 6) to the H1N1 Vaccination Clinic held at Pennsbury High School East on Nov 12th. My husband and I were extremely impressed and from the conversations I've had with many Bucks County Residents...we were not alone.

Every single person that we spoke to that brought their children for vaccinations were saying the same thing. The clinic was amazingly well organized and ran so smoothly you could not help but be impressed. It was visibly obvious from the moment we stepped into the school that a ton of planning went into this vaccination clinic.

With all of the concern, uncertainty, vaccine delays, etc. we were expecting a bit of a "nightmare" walking into the clinic. But... it was the complete opposite. From the time we walked in to time we walked out with both girls vaccinated, it was less than 10 minutes. There were at least a hundred or so people in front of us when we arrived.

There is undoubtedly so many people to thank, from the county officials, police departments, school employees, nurses, volunteers, etc. I took a chance on pulling just a few email addresses from the County Dept of Health website. My hope is that our appreciation and thanks is passed on to as many people as possible that were involved in this effort.

My husband works in the Emergency Management Response/Business Continuity/Safety field. Since the H1N1 issue is something that falls into his realm of responsibility at work, he has firsthand knowledge of what it takes to coordinate such an effort. I know for a fact that he shared his thoughts with his company colleagues on how impressed he was.

I feel thankful to live in such a wonderful County; so hats off to all involved!

Kindest Regards,

Jill Mancia (Lower Makefield Township Resident)

**The January 2010 special editions of Needle Tips and Vaccinate Adults Newsletters are available at the following links:**

<http://www.immunize.org/nt>

<http://www.immunize.org/va/>