

## **Emergency Medical Services workers and H1N1 Influenza Vaccination:**

Emergency Medical Services personnel are one of the priority groups recommended to receive the H1N1 influenza vaccine.

Advanced life support providers including paramedics and mobile intensive care nurses should obtain their vaccination through their mobile intensive care program hospital.

Basic life support agencies including both career and volunteer services should contact their local/county health departments to arrange for vaccination or may make arrangements through their local hospital.

Physician offices and pharmacies are providers who may also receive supplies of the vaccine.

All Emergency Medical Services personnel are encouraged to receive this vaccination – as well as a seasonal flu shot -- because infections among healthcare workers have been reported and this can be a potential source of infection for vulnerable patients.

In addition, increased absenteeism in our EMS system could reduce our ability to provide emergency medical services to the population of New Jersey when they need us most.

All EMS agencies are reminded to practice infection control measures and appropriately use personal protective equipment. In addition, it is important to disinfect equipment and vehicle surfaces.

However, the most important tool we have to prevent the spread of influenza is to practice good hand washing techniques.