DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Under Secretary for Health
Washington DC 20420

MAY 9 2005

MESSAGE FROM THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH

VA INFLUENZA VACCINE ADVISORY #1 for the 2005-2006 INFLUENZA SEASON

1. **Recap of 2004-2005**
2. **Announcement of a 2005-2006 Influenza Vaccine Contract**
3. **Ordering Instructions for Influenza Vaccine for 2005-2006—Note May 2005 Deadline**

1. **Recap of 2004-2005:** The 2004-2005 season began with the announcement that a major United States (U.S.) supplier was unable to deliver its promised supply. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) had fortuitously placed a contract with a different manufacturer for over 2.1 million doses at a cost of $13.3 million. It was anticipated that the national shortage would have impact and the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), together with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), undertook the following steps:

- Entered discussions with the remaining manufacturer and CDC to ensure VA would receive its entire order
- Communicated policies on supplies, distribution, and priority groups to receive vaccine to the VA field in a series of seven advisories from my office developed with essential input from colleagues across VHA
- Assessed VA's vaccine supplies in mid-December, mid-February, and early April and redistributed supplies within VA as needed
- Continued to administer vaccine longer than usual to protect as many veterans and employees as possible

A table of influenza vaccine doses by Veterans Integrated Service Network accompanies this advisory, and the following summarizes VA's influenza vaccine supply as the season progressed:

Total Doses Received	Doses Remaining on 12/10/04	Doses Remaining on 02/16/05	Doses Remaining On 4/6/2005
2,103,650	560,119 (27%)	221,830 (11%)	192,644 (9%)

With your help, we reviewed our supply situation regularly within the VA system and with CDC. Late in the season, influenza vaccine was widely available through CDC, state, and local health departments and redistribution was not needed at any level.

Your hard work in responding to the initial influenza vaccine shortage by communicating priorities to your patients and staff, organizing clinics, and continuing the work of vaccinating late into the season ensured that members of the CDC priority groups were vaccinated first and allowed VA and the Nation as a whole to get through a challenging year and to learn lessons for future. I am grateful to you all and commend you for your efforts.

2. **Announcement of a 2005-2006 Influenza Vaccine Contract:**

The Pharmacy Benefits Management (PBM) Strategic Health Care Group has announced that an award for Influenza Virus Vaccine (Fluzone®) has been made for the 2005-2006 season. This information has already been communicated to pharmacy staff throughout VHA, but it is important to reiterate it again here. As far as we know today, there will be only one approved manufacturer of influenza vaccine for the U.S. As a health care system with a large percentage of patients in high priority groups, we need to act early to ensure we are well-supplied with vaccine. Each VA facility that orders influenza vaccine must pay attention to the following ordering instructions and deadlines:

Contract # V797P-9170 was made to Sanofi Pasteur, Inc., formerly Aventis Pasteur, Inc. Sanofi is unable to provide any adult strength single dose syringes, but can supply a limited number of the single dose pediatric strength syringes. Requirements for the adult single dose syringes were rolled into the quantity of multi-dose vials that are being reserved for VA. Therefore, you will receive your required number of doses, but they will only be available in multi-dose vials. The items and accepted prices are as follows:

ITEM: 10 dose multiple dose vials
NDC# 49281-0376-15 PRICE: $81.61/VI*

ITEM: Pre-filled 0.25 ml (Pediatric Dose) Luer-Lok single dose syringes
NDC# 49281-0005-25 PRICE: $98.74/BX of 10*

* These prices include the newly required (Public Law 108-357) Federal Excise Tax of $0.75/dose.

Discount Terms: Net 30

3. **Ordering Instructions for Influenza Vaccine for 2005-2006—Note May 2005 Deadline:** PBM also provides this information:

THE FOLLOWING IS VERY IMPORTANT: THE SANOFI ORDERING DEADLINE FOR ALL LINE ITEMS IS **MAY 31, 2005, or when VA achieves its reserved doses of Fluzone® vaccine, whichever comes first**. SANOFI IS NOT OBLIGATED TO ACCEPT ANY ORDERS PLACED AFTER MAY 31, 2005; after this date, all orders will be subject to availability.

Sanofi Pasteur, Inc. reserves the right to limit requests (by NDC #) for ordering agencies to no more than 150 percent of that ordering agency's annual Sanofi Pasteur, Inc. purchase of Fluzone® doses calculated over the previous year. Product sold is non-returnable unless shipped in error, damaged in shipment, has concealed damages or is recalled.

Orders may be placed one of three ways:

1) You may call 1/800/822-2463 – have your customer number (if you don't have a customer number, they will set one up for you), and Puchase Order number ready.
2) You may fax your Purchase Orders to 1-800-561-1216.
3) Or you may go to their website www.vaccineshoppe.com

Remittance Address:

Sanofi Pasteur, Inc.
12458 Collections Center Drive
Chicago, IL 60693

Sanofi Pasteur, Inc. has agreed to the following delivery schedule:

- Shipments will be split into two or more deliveries. All ordering facilities will receive a partial shipment by October 15, 2005, with the balance to be completed by December 31, 2005. The estimated dates and estimated quantities of partial shipments, and the estimated dates for completed deliveries, will preferably be determined by July 31, 2005, but no later than August 31, 2005. A notice providing more definitive information regarding future shipments will be sent as it becomes available.

- As a result of the extraordinary circumstances of the 2004-2005 influenza immunization season, Sanofi Pasteur, Inc. developed a special ordering process to ensure for contingency planning in the event of shortages during the 2005-2006 influenza season. You will be required to place TWO alternative order requests for flu vaccine:

REQUEST 1

TOTAL INFLUENZA VACCINE REQUEST – This will be the number of doses each facility will need if there is adequate supply of vaccine and the CDC does not implement preferential immunization or take other steps to influence the distribution of vaccine supplies.

REQUEST 2

PRIORITY GROUP VACCINE REQUEST – This will be the number of doses needed for the Priority Groups, as outlined below:

- Adults aged 65 years or older;
- Persons aged 2-64 years with underlying chronic medical conditions;
- All women who will be pregnant during the influenza season;
- All children aged 6-23 months;
- Health care workers involved in direct patient care;
- Out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of children aged < 6 months;
- Residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities;
- Children aged 6 months – 18 years on chronic aspirin therapy.

Each ordering facility will receive confirmation of receipt of their order requests via e-mail or fax within 72 hours. Prior to shipping, each facility will receive notification of which of their order requests is being processed, and the amount of vaccine that will be shipped.

Influenza Virus Vaccine requests must be placed on a direct basis only. You must state that your order is part of the **VA's National Contract # V797P-9170** and verify that you are being quoted the correct price. Fluzone® vaccine requests placed through the wholesaler chargeback mechanism are not permitted and chargebacks will not be honored.

4. Thank you for your continued work and coordination in the prevention of influenza in the coming year and for taking seriously the threat that influenza poses to our veterans, our employees, and the VA medical system.

5. Questions may be directed to:

- **Clinical issues:** Dr. Gary Roselle or Linda Danko, RN, MSN — Infectious Disease Program Office or Dr. Lawrence Deyton or Victoria Davey, RN, MPH — Public Health Strategic Health Care Group
- **Policy issues:** Odette Levesque, RN — Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Health Operations or Dr. Lawrence Deyton or Victoria Davey, RN, MPH — Public Health Strategic Health Care Group
- **Vaccine Supply Issues:** Dr. Virginia Torrise or Joe Canzolino, RPh — Pharmacy Benefits Management Strategic Health Care Group
- **Occupational Health Issues:** Dr. Michael Hodgson, Pamela Hirsch, NP, or Steve Sloane — Occupational Health Program
- **Public Affairs:** Everett Chasen, Chief Communications Officer, or Connie Raab — Public Health Strategic Health Care Group

Jonathan B. Perlin, MD, PhD, MSHA, FACP

VISN Influenza Vaccine Supplies 04-05 Season

VISN	Doses Received	Quantity on Hand 12/10/04	% Supply Remaining 12/10/04	Quantity on Hand 2/16/05	% Supply Remaining 2/16/05	Quantity on Hand 4/6/2005	% Supply Remaining 4/6/05
1	93,400	25,106	27	not available	-	10,849	12
2	62,450	14,510	23	9,600	15	9,280	15
3	75,000	7,000	9	1,800	2	1,960	3
4	115,100	20,736	18	4,877	4	4,296	4
5	49,670	10,088	20	7,670	15	1,035	2
6	103,500	27,147	26	6,392	6	4,275	4
7	106,040	24,183	23	4,780	5	217	0
8	279,040	100,879	36	44,576	16	40,327	14
9	91,000	18,870	21	7,810	9	6,661	7
10	76,400	12,250	16	4,960	6	4,205	6
11	67,300	22,760	34	8,648	13	5,490	8
12	87,000	28,809	33	18,762	22	13,891	16
15	80,300	12,755	16	2,787	3	2,150	3
16	181,400	42,053	23	12,490	7	10,249	6
17	96,500	33,500	35	10,530	11	10,010	10
18	91,750	17,273	19	8,195	9	7,108	8
19	62,450	20,190	32	8,010	13	6,766	11
20	86,750	21,732	25	17,301	20	16,023	18
21	85,400	23,547	28	12,398	15	10,589	12
22	120,500	51,000	42	24,039	20	14,360	12
23	92,700	25,731	28	5,930	6	12,903	14
Total	**2,103,650**	**560,119**	**27**	**221,830**	**11**	**192,644**	**9**