



ASHP Foundation News Release

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The ASHP Foundation and the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists Offer Free Flu Shots to Annual Meeting Attendees During National Influenza Vaccination Week
Nearly 60 percent of healthcare professionals do not get annual vaccination

ORLANDO, Fla. (December 8, 2008) – Nearly 60 percent of all healthcare professionals do not get a flu shot, despite the fact that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that all healthcare workers get vaccinated, including hospital volunteers. If a healthcare professional has the virus, he or she could more easily spread it because of the amount of time they spend in close proximity with patients. In the case of many hospitalized patients, if they were to develop influenza, they could be at a higher risk of developing related complications.

To address this issue, the ASHP Foundation and the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) are offering free flu shots to pharmacists attending the 2008 ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting this week in Orlando, Fla. The CDC has also named this week National Influenza Vaccination Week, and December 12th is Healthcare Worker Vaccination Day.

“As pharmacists, we should all be advocates for preventive health care and ensure that we are not putting our colleagues and patients at risk for influenza,” said Mark Woods, Pharm.D., Clinical Coordinator and Residency Program Director of Saint Luke's Hospital Pharmacy Department in Kansas City, Mo.

CSL Biotherapies donated the 5,000 vaccines, and VaxAmerica is providing vaccination services. A flu shot center was established in the Orange County Convention Center for the convenience of attendees, and it will continue to operate as long as supplies last.

“Seasonal influenza is a serious health concern for all Americans at this time of year and, in line with the CDC’s recommendations, everyone who is identified as being at high risk, or who wants to avoid getting or spreading influenza, should get a flu shot,” said Robert Lefebvre, Vice President/General Manager of CSL Biotherapies U.S. “Even later in the season, vaccination in January or February can offer protection against seasonal influenza. To increase the vaccination rate among healthcare workers, we are pleased to make Afluria available to attendees of this year’s ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting as a means of helping to ensure that they — and the patients they treat — remain flu-free for the rest of the season.”

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“It is a privilege to join with the ASHP Foundation and CSL Biotherapies to promote healthcare provider immunization,” stated Nancy Creadon, Executive Director, VaxAmerica.

“The ASHP Foundation has a history of conducting educational programs for pharmacists as immunization advocates, and we have sponsored research in the area of vaccination effectiveness,” said Stephen J. Allen, M.S., the ASHP Foundation Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer. “We’re thrilled to have this opportunity to ensure health-system pharmacists and other pharmacy personnel are adequately vaccinated for flu season.”

For more information about the ASHP Foundation-ASHP Flu Shot Center, visit www.ashpfoundation.org.

The ASHP Research and Education Foundation was established in 1968 by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. The mission of the Foundation is to improve the health and well-being of patients in hospitals and health systems through appropriate, safe and effective medication use. The Foundation provides leadership and conducts education and research activities that foster the coordination of interdisciplinary medication management leading to optimal patient outcomes. Emphasis is given to programs that will have a major impact on advancing pharmacy practice in hospitals and health systems, thereby improving public health.

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