



Colorado Department  
of Public Health  
and Environment

# Annual Reporting of Health Care Worker Flu Vaccination Data

## Frequently Asked Questions

March 18, 2014

### Vaccination of Personnel

#### 1. *Who must be vaccinated?*

All “healthcare workers” (HCWs) must be vaccinated. The term is defined in 6 CCR 1011, Chapter 2, § 10.5 (E) as follows:

“Healthcare Worker” means any person working in a healthcare entity who has the potential for exposure to patients, residents, or consumers of the healthcare entity and/or to infectious materials, including body substances, contaminated medical supplies and equipment, contaminated environmental surfaces, or contaminated air.

Healthcare worker includes, but is not limited to, physicians, nurses, nursing assistants, therapists, technicians, emergency medical service personnel, dental personnel, pharmacists, laboratory personnel, autopsy personnel, students and trainees, contractual personnel, home care personnel, and persons not directly involved in patient care (e.g. clerical, dietary, house keeping, laundry, security, maintenance, billing and chaplains) but potentially exposed to infectious agents that can be transmitted to and from the healthcare worker and patients, residents or consumers of the healthcare entity. The definition of healthcare worker does not include volunteers.

(Note that for acute care hospitals required to submit data to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for the Inpatient Quality Reporting Program, volunteers are included.)

#### 2. *Must office administrative staff be vaccinated?*

Yes. See the response to Question 1. The rationale for this is that office staff may come into contact with healthcare workers that have direct contact with patients or residents of the health care facility/agency.

#### 3. *Do the regulations authorize the firing of someone who refuses to get vaccinated?*

No, the regulations do not address hiring or firing decisions. Instead, these decisions are left up to the health care entity.

## Methods of Reporting Data

### 4. *How do I report the data?*

Report data through either:

- the state portal website: <http://www.cohfportal-egov.com>, or
- the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) website: <https://sdn.cdc.gov/>

For detailed data entry instructions see the [Annual Reporting Data Submittal Instructions](#) found at:

*[www.healthfacilities.info](http://www.healthfacilities.info) ► Healthcare Associated Infections (this is a tab in the center of the web page) ► HCW Flu Vaccination Reporting (this is a tab in the left navigation bar)*

### 5. *If I am not a portal administrator, how do I log on to the state portal to report data?*

Start by going to the state portal website at: <http://www.cohfportal-egov.com>. If you do not have a username and password, please contact the portal administrator for your facility/agency. Typically the administrator for the facility/agency is assigned to be the portal administrator. If the facility administrator has changed, or you are not sure who the portal administrator is, please contact the Department's customer assistance line for health care entity licensure and certification at 303-692-2836.

### 6. *If I have submitted data through the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN), do I have to submit it through the state portal as well?*

No. You only need to submit once to either NHSN or the state portal.

## Wearing Masks

### 7. *During what time period do employees need to wear a surgical or procedure mask to be compliant with the rule?*

The requirement for HCWs without proof of vaccination to wear masks only applies to hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers, and long-term care facilities that do not meet the minimum vaccination target (75% for this year and 90% next year). If your facility did not meet the 75% target this year, next influenza season, HCWs without proof of immunization during the next flu season (Nov. 1, 2014 through Mar. 31, 2015), will need to wear a mask when in direct contact with patients/residents and in common areas.

## Documentation Demonstrating Facility Compliance

### 8. *What type of documentation is needed to show proof of compliance with vaccination requirements?*

The facility must maintain records of each employee's annual vaccination or medical exemption. Proof of vaccination is defined in 6 CCR 1011, Chapter 2, § 10.5 (K) as follows:

“Proof of Immunization” means a written statement from a licensed healthcare provider who has administered an influenza vaccine to a healthcare worker, specifying the vaccine administered and the date it was administered or electronic entry in the Colorado Immunization Information System (CIIS).

In addition, in accordance with 6 CCR 1011, Chapter 2:

- §§ 10.9 and 10.12, all facilities must be able to demonstrate how they track and report influenza vaccination rates annually.
- § 10.6 (B)(2), facilities that indicated that they have met the vaccination targets must have supporting documentation for a period of three years to verify the vaccination rate figures.
- § 10.10, facilities *other than* hospitals, hospital units, ambulatory surgical centers, and nursing homes must maintain declinations.

## Facilities Patient/Resident Perspective

### 9. *As a home care consumer, can I find out if my care provider is vaccinated?*

You may want to ask the caregiver directly if s/he has received an influenza vaccination or ask the agency to provide you with a vaccinated caregiver. Based on the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA), the home care agency cannot disclose your care provider's immunization status without their authorization.

## For Further Questions

If you have additional questions, please contact:

- Tamara Hoxworth, Manager, CDPHE, Health and Safety Data Services at [tamara.hoxworth@state.co.us](mailto:tamara.hoxworth@state.co.us) and 303-692-2930
- Carolyn Elliott, Patient Safety Specialist, at [carolyn.elliott@state.co.us](mailto:carolyn.elliott@state.co.us) and 303-692-2923
- The Licensure Customer Assistance Line at 303-692-2836