



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – April 29, 2010

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### ***Anniversary of Confirmed H1N1 Influenza in Arizona***

(Phoenix, AZ) – Arizona confirmed the first case of H1N1 influenza one year ago today sparking the largest public health response in years. Although the H1N1 virus is not as severe as first thought, it is highly contagious prompting the first pandemic in more than four decades. The novel virus affected approximately 1 in every 3 people. H1N1 continues to be the main strain of flu in the state today.

“I would like to thank the Arizona Department of Health Services for its swift and widespread effort to contain the spread of this very contagious and often times deadly virus,” said Governor Jan Brewer. “The partnerships and collaborative efforts across the health care community show that Arizona is prepared and ready to act.”

ADHS immediately responded to the discovery of the new virus using the pandemic flu plan. However, the year-long response presented new opportunities for the state, including:

- Strengthening partnerships with counties, hospitals, private physicians, health associations and retail pharmacies to ensure Arizonans received accurate information and easily accessible vaccines.
- Creating an effective collaboration between ADHS, the Arizona Pharmacy Alliance and the Arizona Board of Pharmacy that resulted in new legislation to make vaccines more accessible to the general public.
- Collaborating with Tribes and Indian Health Services for vaccine planning and distribution, establishing groundwork for future successful public health efforts.
- Informing Arizonans about where to find vaccinations by integrating local flu clinic data into the national online Flu Shot Finder with Google.
- Leading the nation with recommendations about school closings based on the severity of the virus.
- Using effective communication to teach flu prevention and the importance of vaccination.

“Thanks to the efforts from many people and organizations around Arizona, we (public health officials) minimized H1N1’s damage and saved lives,” said ADHS Director, Will

Humble. “Overall, I was pleased with the response from the public, healthcare providers and from our local, state and national public health system. There were plenty of lessons learned by everyone in the system, but through it all, most folks did the right thing. They waited their turn for the vaccine and, in the meantime, kept kids home when they were sick and did a good job paying attention to hand washing.”

Although the pandemic is waning and media coverage has greatly declined, ADHS reminds Arizonans that H1N1 influenza is still in the community and will likely continue into the fall flu season. Vaccination is the only way to prevent influenza and everyone over 6 months of age should have an influenza shot. In addition to getting a flu shot, Arizonans should continue practicing good public health hygiene by doing the following:

- Cover coughs and sneezes with a disposable tissue or your elbow or sleeve;
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based sanitizer; and
- Stay home if you are sick and limit contact with others.

For more information, visit [www.StopTheSpreadAZ.org](http://www.StopTheSpreadAZ.org)

H1N1 Influenza by the Numbers: April 2009 – April 2010

Estimated H1N1 influenza Cases in US	60 million
Estimated H1N1 influenza Cases in AZ	8,720
H1N1 influenza Hospitalizations in US	270,000
H1N1 influenza Hospitalizations in AZ	1,888
Estimated H1N1 influenza Deaths in US	12,270
H1N1 influenza Deaths in AZ	149
Pediatric Deaths due to H1N1 influenza in US	281
Pediatric Deaths due to H1N1 influenza in AZ	20
H1N1 vaccines distributed in US	124 million
H1N1 vaccines distributed in AZ	2,611,700

Source: [cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://cdc.gov/h1n1flu) & [azdhs.gov/flu](http://azdhs.gov/flu)

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