



By Jan Rahn
Managing Editor

There were 124 youth who lined up late in the day Thursday, Oct. 8, to receive the first H1N1 vaccine available in Perkins County.

Personnel from the Colglazier Clinic and the Grant Medical Clinic administered the immunizations via nasal spray—shots are not yet available.

Only 180 doses of the nasal vaccine were received the first part of last week and the H1N1 influenza vaccination clinic at the Perkins County Elementary School in Grant was set up to provide dosage to the two-year-old through 18-year-old part of the age group most targeted by this particular illness.

Consent forms were required and children were screened for medical approval to receive the nasal spray vaccine. The vaccine is a live attenuated (weakened) virus that is sprayed into the nose. An inactivated vaccine will also become available later as a shot.

The live attenuated (nasal spray vaccine) is approved for people from age two through 49 years of age who are not pregnant and who do not have certain health conditions.

Those recommended to receive it first are healthy people between 2-49 years of age and those from 25-49 years of age who live with or care for infants younger than six months of age, or who are health care or emergency medical personnel.

As more vaccine becomes available, other healthy 25 through 49-year-olds should also be vaccinated.

While certain groups should not get the live attenuated intranasal vaccine, it is important that they be vaccinated—they should get the H1N1 flu shot.

According to Dr. Colglazier, only 10 doses of the shot vaccine were being made available to the clinics in Perkins County by the Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department—the federal government entity controlling the allocation of vaccine within the eight-state area they serve.

Those who will get the first 10 shots are pregnant women. Dr. Colglazier said the minimal number of shots received will be enough to cover the pregnant women in the county.

Thus far, no one has tested positive from 10 H1N1 flu tests that have been done between the two clinics.

Colglazier said five patients tested positive in Kimball during the first part of last week.

Two confirmed cases of H1N1 were reported in Wauneta the prior week.

The goal in Perkins County is to immunize all students kindergarten through 12th grade, said Dr. Colglazier, plus selective health care providers.

Youth who did not get the nasal spray vaccine last week may obtain the free governmentally issued vaccine from either of the clinics, who are both waiving administrative fees.

By December, there should be sufficient vaccine available for everyone.

H1N1 flu is widespread in Nebraska. The state received about 6,000 doses of vaccine last week and immediately distributed it in what is deemed to be one of the largest vaccine

campaigns in U.S. history.

What is H1N1 Influenza?

2009 H1N1 influenza (also called swine flu) is caused by a new strain of influenza virus. It has spread to many countries.

Like other flu viruses, 2009 H1N1 spreads from person to person through coughing, sneezing and sometimes through touching objects contaminated with the virus.

Symptoms include: Fatigue, fever, sore throat, muscle aches, chills, coughing, sneezing. Some people also have diarrhea and vomiting.

Most people feel better in a week, but some get pneumonia or other serious illnesses. Some people have to be hospitalized and some die.