



## NATIONAL INFLUENZA VACCINE SUMMIT NEWSLETTER

# *Influenza Activity Spotlights*

Monday, October 1, 2007

Issue 4

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### **Professional Medical Organizations**

**Please disseminate widely to all of your members.**

1. Please note the [attached press release](#) announcing CSL Biotherapies' FDA approval for Afluria. CSL has informed the Summit that it expects to have 2M doses available for distribution to arrive before the end of October. CSL also wishes to inform the Summit that one of the two formulations is thimerosal free and that a significant proportion of the 2M doses will be made of preservative-free/thimerosal-free prefilled syringes. Both formulations are for use in persons 18 years and older.
2. On October 1, the Assistant Surgeon General, Dr. Anne Schuchat, released the following message to public health partners:

Dear Public Health Colleagues and Partners:

While influenza season itself is unpredictable, we do know that new tools are needed each year to help educate the public and promote vaccination to groups at high risk. This year, the CDC is pleased to update you on a few new flu resources, in addition to our ongoing efforts.

Please use our newly revised, easy-to-navigate flu website: [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu) as a resource both for yourself and for patients.

On the new website are free flu materials for this season. This year's emphasis is on high-risk children (such as those with asthma or diabetes) and their caregivers, as well as a focus on protecting infants and the elderly through family and community vaccination. These are available for download for office or commercial printing at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/flugallery/index.htm>

Finally, to help all of us understand the complex pathway from flu vaccine production to distribution for your clinic, there is a new "vodcast" available—you can watch it right on your computer, or download it to an iPod. Take a few minutes to see our very own Drs. Bill Atkinson and Larry Pickering in their starring roles with an "egg-citing" bonus:

<http://www2a.cdc.gov/podcasts/player.asp?f=6678>

Thank you all for your continued efforts to "fight the flu!"

Anne Schuchat, MD  
RADM, US Public Health Service  
Assistant Surgeon General  
Director, National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases  
Mailstop E-05  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Atlanta, GA 30333  
Phone: 404-639-8200

3. Attached is the *New England Journal of Medicine* paper on thimerosal in vaccines and neurodevelopmental delays ([“Early Thimerosal Exposure and Neuropsychological Outcomes at 7 to 10 Years”](#)) that was published in the September 27, 2007 issue. Also attached are the two editorials ([Offit](#) and [Sugarman](#)) that were printed in this same issue. Since influenza vaccine is the one vaccine most impacted by this debate, we should all be prepared to answer questions. You will also find [CDC’s talking points](#) on the issue. Although the title says “draft”, they are the final, approved talking points from the CDC.
4. Attached is a [review](#) published in the October 2007 issue of *Lancet Infectious Diseases* that highlights difficulties in interpreting data from observational studies on vaccine effectiveness in older people. The review contains a well constructed discussion of the biases that are difficult to control for in these studies. The accompanying [commentary](#) is more contentious. Talking points from the CDC are also [attached](#).
5. Please also find a September 25, 2007 [letter](#) from Representative Weldon to Representative Obey on why his amendment on thimerosal is a good thing. Several partners of the Summit are preparing responses.
6. Also [attached](#) is the *MMWR* report on pre-season influenza viruses circulation through September 15, 2007.