



NEWS RELEASE

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(Note: Dr. Oxman will be available for media interviews immediately following the briefing)

Multnomah County Health Department assesses successes, challenges of H1N1 influenza response

Briefing with Board of County Commissioners is scheduled for March 11

Multnomah County Health Department Director Lillian Shirley and Tri-county Health Officer Dr. Gary Oxman will lead a review of the county's H1N1 influenza work for the Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners on Thursday, March 11 from 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. in the Boardroom.

Public health recognized the emergence of the H1N1 influenza virus in April 2009 and H1N1 was declared a pandemic in June. Initially the virus appeared to be mild, but there was considerable uncertainty about the course the pandemic would take.

According to Tri-county Health Officer Dr. Gary Oxman, "This uncertainty appropriately prompted an aggressive public health response. While we are no longer in an urgent situation and H1N1 transmission is at or below levels that are typical for this time of year, this event is an important opportunity to review core public health functions and how we can amplify those functions in an emergency situation."

The briefing will include details on how H1N1 spread in the community, allocation and distribution of the H1N1 influenza vaccine, comparing local vaccine uptake with national averages, an overview of public-private partnerships that facilitated protecting the health of our community, and planning for the upcoming influenza season.

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