



12 January 2017

[Pharmacy Name]
[Street Address]
[City], Illinois [ZIP]

Dear Pharmacist-in-Charge:

The Illinois Department of Public Health's (IDPH), the Illinois Pharmacists Association (IPhA), along with other stakeholders have partnered together to collaborate and develop strategies to address medication countermeasures, pandemic awareness, and prepare pharmacists to assist their communities in a public health emergency. In the world of emergency preparedness and planning, we often remind ourselves of this basic truth: *"You don't want to be exchanging business cards in the middle of a disaster."*

Since the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic, public health agencies have been working to strengthen relationships with community partners, such as pharmacies, in order to establish coordinated pandemic vaccination planning and response efforts. Coordination between state health departments and pharmacies is essential to expanding public access to influenza pandemic vaccination during the next influenza pandemic and to ensuring that pharmacies have early, timely, and ongoing access to the vaccine supply. Illinois Pharmacists have a long history of collaborating and supporting the Illinois Department of Public Health. Together, we have coordinated on the following emergency preparedness programs and initiatives:

- Providing H₁N₁ vaccinations in 2009.
- Developing strategies for H₇N₉ response.
- Presentations on the role of pharmacists and pharmacies in public health emergencies at the 2015 Illinois Public Health and Healthcare Coalitions Preparedness Summit.

A number of public health and pharmacy organizations¹ have partnered together to develop a generic memorandum of understanding (MOU) that can be adapted to meet specific needs during an influenza pandemic. The purpose of the MOU is to establish roles and responsibilities for pandemic vaccination planning and response between state health agencies and pharmacies regarding provider enrollment and training, vaccine allocation and distribution, and more. The MOU also serves as an opportunity to strengthen partnerships between public health and community pharmacies, which will benefit both sets of organizations and the communities served.

We are asking for you to step forward and be available to assist in a public health emergency. The Illinois Pharmacy Workgroup has developed the enclosed Memorandum of Understanding to establish a standardized process, procedures, and list of responsibilities for the State Department of Public Health, your Local Department of Public Health, and your Pharmacy in a public health emergency. We encourage reviewing the MOU and considering

¹ These organizations include the American Pharmacists Association (APhA), National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS), National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations (NASPA), Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

signing onto the MOU to become a vital component of the taskforce of health care providers and professionals that are needed to protect our communities.

In our development process, we recognized the impact and expertise that pharmacists can offer during a public health emergency. Also, we recognized that we will need to prepare you for your responsibilities. The Illinois Pharmacy Workgroup is developing an education package to take you through the various steps of a public health emergency and to provide detail education on disease states that may be involved.

We invite you to attend an informational meeting on the Role of Illinois Pharmacists in a Public Health Emergency. This meeting will highlight the MOU, provide an overview of the project, and allow plenty of time for your questions. The meeting will be held on the following dates: **February 2, 2017 and March 2, 2017 both from 11:00AM to 12:30PM and held at the IDPH Regional Offices (locations and address below).** These meeting will be recorded and are encouraged to attend, in person.

If you have any questions about the MOU or the program, as a whole, please feel free to contact Carla Little, PhD, with the IDPH at 312/814-1091 or via email at Carla.Little@Illinois.gov.

The mission of the Illinois Department of Public Health is to promote the health of the people of Illinois through the prevention and control of disease and injury.

The Illinois Pharmacists Association is dedicated to enhancing the professional competency of pharmacists, advancing the standards of pharmacy practice, improving pharmacists' effectiveness in assuring rational drug use in society, and leading in the resolution of public policy issues affecting pharmacists. IPhA was founded in 1880.

Sincerely,

Carla N. Little, PhD
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Strategic National Stockpile (SNS)/
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Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)
Office of Preparedness and Response (OPR)

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Illinois Department of Public Health – Office of Preparedness and Response Regional Locations:

- **Chicago Office:** 122 S. Michigan Avenue, 7th Floor Chicago, IL 60603
- **Rockford Regional Office:** 4302 North Main Rockford, IL 61103
- **Springfield Office:** 422 S. 5th Street Springfield. IL 62701
- **Marion Regional Office:** 2309 West Main Street Suite 106 Marion, IL 62959
- **Edwardsville Regional Office:** 22 Kettle River Road Glen Carbon, IL 62034