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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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H1N1 VACCINE ADMINISTERED IN THE SCHOOLS

Snow Hill, Md., 10/26/09 The Worcester County Health Department is beginning to provide the H1N1 Flu vaccine to students in Worcester County high schools. Health Department nurses will be administering it to the students who have signed permission slips from their parents. As vaccine arrives, day care centers, pre-schools, elementary and middle schools will be scheduled. Parents are encouraged to check for permission slips to be sent home with students in the next week or two.

The vaccine supply is slowly increasing and the Health Department is now able to schedule specific targeted vaccination sites. Eventually, anyone that desires the vaccine will be able to receive it. Currently the Health Department is focusing on providing vaccinations to the highest risk groups identified by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) which includes pregnant women, direct health care providers, and children.

The younger population that is not traditionally impacted by the seasonal flu has been contracting the H1N1 flu at a higher rate than other age groups. 53% of the hospitalizations across the U.S. are among people under the age of 25 years while only 7% have been over the age of 65 years.

It is important to consult with your health care provider if you have symptoms of flu like illness (fever, cough, sore throat, aches, chills, headache, fatigue), and stay at home until you have been fever-free for 24 hours.

As H1N1 vaccine becomes more available, the Health Department, in partnership with Atlantic General Hospital, will offer public clinics for targeted risk groups and later expand to the general public. This is expected to occur in November.

For more information about the H1N1 flu and how to protect yourself, go to www.Flu.gov . To learn about availability of the local flu vaccines and clinics, call the Worcester County Health Information Line at 410-632-4321 or check the website at www.worcesterhealth.org .