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October 1, 2015

TO: Licensed Acute Care Hospitals
Skilled Nursing Facilities
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FROM: Jeffrey D. Gunzenhauser, M.D., M.P.H.
Interim Health Officer

SUBJECT: **CONTINUATION OF HEALTH OFFICER ORDER FOR ANNUAL INFLUENZA VACCINATION PROGRAMS FOR HEALTHCARE PERSONNEL OR MASKING OF HEALTH CARE WORKERS DURING THE INFLUENZA SEASON**

With influenza season approaching, this letter is a reminder that the "Health Officer Order for Annual Influenza Vaccination Programs for Healthcare Personnel or Masking of Health Care Workers during the Influenza Season" remains in effect. This Order was first issued in October 2013 (Attachment 1), before the 2013-14 influenza season, by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LAC/DPH) Health Officer pursuant to the authority under §120175 of the California Health and Safety Code. The Order mandates that licensed facilities require influenza vaccination for their Health Care Personnel (HCP) or that, HCP who decline to be vaccinated, must wear a mask when they are in contact with patients or working in patient-care areas during the annual influenza season. The influenza season is defined as the period from November 1 through March 31, unless continued influenza activity is ongoing. The intent of this Order is to lower the risk of transmission of influenza to patients in licensed acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities and intermediate care facilities in the County. To ensure compliance, and to gain a better understanding of implementation processes, the LAC/DPH Health Facility Inspection Division will be monitoring implementation of the Health Officer Order during the influenza season.

LAC/DPH requests that all hospitals, in addition to maintaining records of the influenza vaccination status for all employees, contractors, and volunteers, also maintain the following records:

- Declination forms for influenza vaccinations
- Healthcare associated influenza infections (onset >72 hours after admission)

Thank you in advance for complying with our LAC/DPH request. These data play a key role in our ability to assess our joint efforts to improve influenza prevention among high risk populations in healthcare facilities. Attachment 2 is a Frequently Asked Questions document that responds to some of the queries received last season about the Order. Further questions may be directed to the LAC Acute Communicable Disease Control Program at (213) 240-7941. Questions about compliance and implementation may be directed to DPH Health Facilities Inspection Division at (626) 569-3724.

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The LAC/DPH shares with all healthcare professionals and facilities in the County, the goal of our patients receiving safe and effective care. We look forward to all facilities that are subject to this Order complying fully with its requirements.

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Attachments