

North Dakota Department of Health

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

Oct. 5, 2004

For More Information, Contact:

Heather Weaver

Immunization Program Manager

North Dakota Department of Health

Phone: 701.328.2035

E-mail: hweaver@state.nd.us

North Dakota Department of Health Monitors Influenza Vaccine Supply

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health today received word from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that shipments of influenza vaccine manufactured by Chiron Corp. were blocked by health authorities in Britain because of manufacturing concerns. As a result, the Department of Health is working with local health units and private health-care providers to monitor the supply of influenza vaccine available in the state, according to Heather Weaver, Immunization Program manager.

Chiron had contracted to provide the United States with about 48 million doses of vaccine. Health-care providers in North Dakota ordered doses of vaccine from both Chiron and Aventis, the other manufacturer of influenza vaccine.

“The loss of nearly half the anticipated national supply of influenza vaccine definitely will have an impact on how many people will be able to receive the vaccine this season,” Weaver said. “Right now, we are working with our public and private health-care providers to determine the amount of vaccine available in North Dakota. We also are waiting for guidance from CDC concerning who should be vaccinated first. The indication is that people at high-risk of complications from the flu will be the first priority for vaccination efforts.”

The Department of Health will provide updates about the vaccine situation to the media and the public as more information becomes available from the CDC and other health partners.

-- 30 --

Please note: To access archived news releases and other information, visit the North Dakota Department of Health Press Room at www.nddohpressroom.gov.