

2011-2012 Ambulatory Surgery Center (ASC) Health Care Workers Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Survey

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) has revised the 2011 Maryland Freestanding Ambulatory Surgical Facility Survey to include questions on Health Care Workers (HCW) Influenza Vaccination activity. A similar questionnaire is required of Maryland hospitals for the 2011/2012 flu season. This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document has been created to answer questions regarding this most recent revision to the 2011 Maryland Freestanding Ambulatory Surgical Facility Survey. The MHCC intends to update this FAQ document periodically to reflect additional inquiries received from ambulatory surgery facilities. For your convenience, this document with the attached survey questions will be posted on the Commission's website at http://mhcc.maryland.gov/healthcare_associated_infections/index.html. The website also contains additional background information on the Commission's HAI data collection and reporting activities.

1. Are Ambulatory Surgery Centers required to report data on HCW influenza vaccination rates?

Beginning with the 2009 annual survey, the MHCC has required that all Maryland ambulatory surgery centers (ASCs) report data on the number of paid, full-time and part-time employees who received FluMist® or injectable influenza vaccine on-site or off-site. Although ASCs are required to report to MHCC on these specific health care workers, they are encouraged to vaccinate **all** staff members.

2. How will the Commission use the new data collected through the 2011-2012 Maryland Freestanding Ambulatory Surgical Facility Survey?

The data collected on health care worker influenza vaccination rates in the 2009 Maryland Freestanding Ambulatory Surgical Facility Survey was not publicly reported on the Maryland Ambulatory Surgery Performance Evaluation Guide this year. Data collected on HCW influenza vaccination rates in the 2011-2012 Maryland Freestanding Ambulatory Surgical Facility Survey will be publicly reported on the Maryland Ambulatory Surgery Performance Evaluation Guide following a preview period. ASCs will be provided with data to compare their performance on this measure to the statewide average and with top performing ASCs before the information is released to the public on the Guide.

3. What is the period for collecting data on HCW influenza vaccination rates?

Data on HCW influenza vaccination rates for the reporting period, September 1, 2011–April 15, 2012, will be reported to the Commission via eight questions on the 2011 Maryland Freestanding Ambulatory Surgical Facility Survey. Three of the eight questions are focused on ASC policies regarding mandatory vaccination of employees. The log-in information for the on-line survey will be mailed to all facilities in April 2012.

- 4. For reporting HCW influenza vaccination status, who is considered a health care worker? Is it direct patient care staff only or everyone that works in the ambulatory surgery center whether they have direct patient contact or not?**

Health care workers are defined as paid full-time and part-time employees. Any health care worker who falls under this description must be included in the data reporting, whether or not they have direct patient contact.

- 5. Are ‘prn’ (Pro Re Nata or “as needed”) employees included in the reporting of ambulatory surgery center HCW influenza vaccination rates?**

If these employees are paid by the ambulatory surgery center, they must be included in the data reported to the MHCC.

- 6. Are contract physician groups, such as anesthesiologists, that work in the ambulatory surgery center considered employees?**

For this reporting requirement, these groups are not included because they are not considered paid employees of the ambulatory surgery center. However, ambulatory surgery centers are encouraged to vaccinate all staff members, including contract physician groups.

- 7. For ambulatory surgery center health care workers receiving the vaccine off-site, is the ASC required to obtain documentation?**

MHCC strongly recommends that ambulatory surgery centers obtain documentation from HCWs who state they have been vaccinated off-site.

- 8. Is there a standard declination form? If we have our own declination forms, will we need to determine which categories the declining employees choose to report to MHCC?**

The Commission does not currently have a standard declination form. To facilitate reporting of required data, the Commission recommends that categories for medical and religious reasons be available options on the HCW declination form used by each ambulatory surgery center.

- 9. If a HCW declines for a medical reason, are we required to report the specific type of medical reason?**

You are only required to report the total number of HCWs who declined for medical reasons. In this survey, medical contraindications include the following: a severe egg allergy, severe allergy to any vaccine component, severe reaction after a previous dose of influenza vaccine, or a history of Guillain-Barre Syndrome. We strongly recommend that HCWs who decline for these reasons provide documentation which can be kept on file at your ambulatory surgery center.