



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
LANSING

November 2017

Dear Michigan Hospital CEO:

With influenza already putting ten Michiganders in the hospital in the 2017-2018 flu season, it is important to ensure that all healthcare personnel (HCP) are up-to-date with vaccinations that will protect patients and workers from preventable diseases like flu and pertussis.

As a grim reminder of how easily vaccine-preventable diseases can spread, during the recent hepatitis A outbreak in southeast Michigan, 83 percent of over 525 patients confirmed with the disease by early November had been hospitalized. These hospitalizations could potentially expose the facilities' dedicated healthcare workers, patients and visitors to the disease. In fact, 12 healthcare workers were confirmed to have contracted hepatitis A as of Nov. 21.

Both influenza and pertussis are vaccine-preventable, and patients deserve to be protected from them while receiving care in a hospital setting. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and the Michigan Health & Hospital Association (MHA) strongly encourage hospitals to ensure their HCP are appropriately immunized to protect everyone in the hospital.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that all HCP receive an annual [flu vaccination](#). The MDHHS conducted a hospital [survey](#) in 2016, which showed that 77 percent have successfully implemented a mandatory flu vaccination policy for all HCP. Flu vaccination rates among HCP highlights the positive impact flu vaccination policies have on coverage; hospitals with a flu vaccination policy reported that their HCP flu vaccination coverage was 95 percent, in comparison to 67 percent among hospitals without a policy.

The CDC also recommends that HCP receive a single dose of tetanus toxoid, reduced diphtheria toxoid and acellular pertussis ([Tdap vaccine](#)) to prevent transmission of pertussis. Only 41 percent of Michigan hospitals have mandatory Tdap vaccination policies, highlighting a need for more proactive approaches to ensure HCP are protected against pertussis.

The American Hospital Association [supports](#) mandatory influenza vaccination policies for HCP to protect the health and well-being of patients, with a goal of achieving the highest possible level of protection. All Michigan hospitals should remember this goal as they promote patient safety through implementing new policies or enforcing existing policies.

Talking points on HCP vaccination for [influenza](#) and [pertussis](#) and sample policies for [influenza](#) and other immunizations, including Tdap, for [newly hired HCP](#) and for [current HCP](#) are [available](#) to assist in reviewing your facility's vaccination policies and taking action. Questions should be directed to [Sam R. Watson at the MHA](#) at (517) 323-3443.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian Peters".

Brian Peters  
Chief Executive Officer  
Michigan Health & Hospital Association

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eden Wells".

Eden Wells, MD, MPH, FACPM  
Chief Medical Executive  
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services