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Office of Public Affairs

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## Big Box Retailers Approved For Direct Shipments Of H1N1 Vaccine

RALEIGH — As part of a nationwide initiative to improve vaccination rates against 2009 H1N1 virus, retail pharmacy chains and retail-based medical clinics across North Carolina are now able to get H1N1 vaccine directly from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

State Health Director Jeffrey Engel said he and health directors from across the country are supporting the supplementary 2009 Influenza (H1N1) vaccine initiative by the CDC as a way to get more vaccine out to the public at a critical time.

“The more people we can get immunized against this virus, the less likely it is to spread in the coming months,” said Engel. “This initiative helps us expand the pool of providers and venues where vaccine is available.”

According to the CDC, retail chains will be allowed to order vaccine directly from the CDC on a weekly basis through the end of January. To participate, chains must be capable of ordering an initial minimum of 100,000 doses of vaccine at one time and delivering all doses of vaccine received to vaccination administration sites within two days after receipt of vaccine.

The supplemental retail initiative will be in addition to the vaccine doses allocated to states based on their population size. North Carolina is expected to receive up to two million more doses of vaccine before the end of January.

Retail pharmacies may opt to continue receiving vaccine through the N.C. Division of Public Health, which is responsible for vaccine distribution to retail and independent pharmacies, local health departments, colleges and universities, private providers and hospitals.

Consumers are advised to check directly with their local pharmacies or health departments for vaccine availability or visit [flu.nc.gov](http://flu.nc.gov) for a convenient flu vaccine locator.

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Location: 101 Blair Drive • Adams Building • Raleigh, N.C. 27603

[www.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.ncdhhs.gov)

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