

# Dutchess County Department of Behavioral & Community Health

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## Public Health Alert

Wednesday, January 26, 2018 - 2 pm

### Influenza Cases Widespread in New York State

With the steady increase in influenza cases throughout the region, the Dutchess County Department of Behavioral & Community Health (DBCH) advises clinicians:

- Influenza should be high on their list of possible diagnoses for ill patients;
- Individuals with suspected or confirmed influenza **should be considered for treatment as soon as possible with a neuraminidase inhibitor antiviral**. Do not wait for laboratory confirmation nor prior influenza vaccination history.

**With an increase in the number of influenza cases reported statewide, DBCH reminds residents and clinicians of the importance of getting vaccinated against the flu. In addition, clinicians are advised to:**

- Recommend Influenza vaccination to patients 6 months of age and older who can be vaccinated, especially those who are pregnant or at higher risk for complications. Vaccination should be encouraged during the remainder of this season for as long as influenza viruses are circulating;
- For individuals who cannot be vaccinated, especially infants less than 6 months of age, please encourage influenza vaccination for anyone who may come into contact with the unvaccinated individual, including siblings, caregivers, and family members.
- For providers without a supply of influenza vaccine, vaccine is readily available throughout the region, visit [flu.gov](http://flu.gov) for additional information and locations. In addition, as a result of Governor Cuomo's Executive Order of 01/25/2018, pharmacists are now able to vaccinate children ages 2-18.

In addition, Section 2.59 of the New York State Sanitary Code ([10 NYCRR § 2.59](http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/regs/259.html)) requires all Article 28, 36, or 40 regulated healthcare and residential facilities and agencies to ensure all personnel, as defined in the regulation, **not vaccinated against influenza for the current influenza season wear a surgical or procedure mask while in areas where patients or residents are typically present**. For more information, visit <http://health.ny.gov/FluMaskReg>.