

Australian Medical Association Limited

ABN 37 008 426 793

42 Macquarie Street, Barton ACT 2600: PO Box 6090, Kingston ACT 2604
Telephone: (02) 6270 5400 Facsimile (02) 6270 5499
Website : <http://www.ama.com.au/>



**GPs TO PLAY LEADING ROLE IN PROVIDING SWINE FLU
VACCINATIONS**

AMA President, Dr Andrew Pesce, today urged people – particularly those who are identified as being at high risk – to contact their GP to make arrangements to be vaccinated against swine flu.

Higher risk people – including pregnant women, chronic disease sufferers, Indigenous Australians, and frontline health workers – will have priority for vaccination in the initial phase of the rollout, but others will not be precluded should there be an opportunity to vaccinate them early.

The national pandemic influenza vaccine campaign was launched in Perth this morning and the first supplies of the swine flu vaccine are available in general practices around the country from today.

Dr Pesce said the AMA welcomes the Government’s recognition of the role of Australia’s GPs at the front and centre of the vaccine campaign.

“GPs have the best knowledge of an individual’s overall health history, and people trust their GP,” Dr Pesce said.

“The AMA encourages people to get vaccinated and not to take any chances,” Dr Pesce said.

“While not all general practices will be supplying the vaccine, people should contact their regular GP to get advice on when and where to be vaccinated at the earliest opportunity.”

Children under the age of 10 should not be vaccinated at this stage. Clinical trials of a vaccine suitable for people under 10 are continuing.

Dr Pesce said the Government, the AMA and the community fully appreciate the contribution being made by GPs all around Australia to making this vital public health initiative a success.

“The AMA and other medical groups worked closely with the Government, the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA), and the Chief Medical Officer on the rollout of the national pandemic influenza vaccination campaign,” Dr Pesce said.

“We all agreed that there are compelling clinical reasons for rolling out the vaccine now in Australia and we all agreed that general practice would be the key to a safe and effective rollout of the vaccine right across the country.”

30 September 2009

CONTACT: John Flannery
Peter Jean

02 6270 5477 / 0419 494 761
02 6270 5464 / 0427 209 753