STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER

To: **Connecticut Hospital and Healthcare Facility Administrators**

From: **J. Robert Galvin, MD, MPH, MBA, Commissioner**

Date: **December 7, 2009**

Re: **Guidance for Protecting Workers at Healthcare Facilities during the 2009 H1N1 Influenza Pandemic**

On October 14, 2009, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated the Interim Guidance on Infection Control Measures for 2009 H1N1 Influenza in Healthcare Settings, Including Protection of Healthcare Personnel. On November 20, 2009, the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued a compliance directive to ensure uniform procedures when conducting inspections to identify and minimize or eliminate high to very high risk occupational exposures to the 2009 H1N1 influenza A virus.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) recommends that employers, including healthcare facilities, develop and maintain plans and policies for worker protection from the 2009 H1N1 influenza A virus that follow these federal guidelines. Employers should adhere to all applicable OSHA standards and guidelines for worker protection from known or suspected hazards, including instituting an OSHA-compliant respiratory protection program in situations where their personnel are utilizing N95 respirators for protection against respiratory hazards.

Please see the attached "Q&A: Guidance for Protecting Workers at Healthcare Facilities during the 2009 H1N1 Influenza Pandemic".

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this guidance or its intent, please contact Tom St. Louis, Occupational Health Unit Supervisor at the Connecticut Department of Public Health at (860) 509-7740.

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