

For immediate release

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Influenza Concerns Create Need for an Innovative Approach to Protecting Employees

Passport Health to study the impact of offering intranasal influenza vaccine on vaccination rates

Miami, FL – 6/26/2008- Growing concerns in the business community over the influenza virus spreading throughout the workplace has created a need for a new approach to immunizing employees. Passport Health, a nationwide network of over 165 vaccine and travel medicine providers has signed an agreement with MedImmune, a division of Astra Zeneca, to assess the impact of offering intranasal influenza vaccine on influenza vaccination rates in the employer setting starting September 2008.

According to the CDC, the influenza virus causes illness in 10% to 20% of the population each year. Approximately 200,000 people are hospitalized each year in the United States because of influenza. Some 36,000 people succumb to the illness annually. The flu accounts for millions of lost work days in addition to decreased productivity at the office. Passport Health is committed to reducing the occurrence and impact of the flu. Last year, the Baltimore-based company administered over one million doses of flu vaccine during on-site clinics and at their 165 nationwide locations, Miami included.

This fall, Passport Health will offer some of their corporate clients the opportunity to participate in a clinical research study underwritten by the sponsor--MedImmune. This study will help evaluate whether having a choice of an intranasal influenza vaccine, in addition to injectable vaccine, will increase vaccination rates in employer-based clinics. Research data will be evaluated by the University of Pittsburgh. Passport Health Miami has already contacted several local businesses in order to participate in this study.

In the past, Passport Health has worked with the Department of Defense, Centers for Disease Control, pharmaceutical companies, and clinical research organizations to conduct clinical trials. Prior clinical trial research projects have included Anthrax, Hepatitis B, Yellow Fever and influenza to mention a few. Passport Health is also working towards partnering with several pharmaceutical sponsors for clinical trials on avian influenza. All Passport Health medical professionals participating in the MedImmune study have completed rigorous clinical trial training through the University Of Rochester School Of Nursing.

The best way to prevent the flu is to immunize. The time to get a flu vaccine starts when the vaccine becomes available in September and continues into winter, through January or later, when the influenza season typically peaks. In Miami, the season tends to start later than the national average, but could continue until March. The CDC recommends that the general population get vaccinated especially: all children, people over the age of fifty, healthcare personnel, the immuno-compromised and those in contact with them, and pregnant women. Passport Health is committed to minimizing the impact of the influenza virus by administering flu clinics throughout the country and participating in clinical trials. As experts in the field of immunization, Passport Health's nurses and doctors offer broad expertise about all vaccines, including flu and travel immunizations, and the diseases for which they provide protection. For more information, please visit <http://www.passporthealthmiami.com>

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