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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 8, 2009

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National H1N1 Antiviral Medications Reach Kitsap County

*District Partnering with Rite Aid Pharmacies to Distribute Medications
Requiring a Doctor's Prescription*

BREMERTON, WA — In response to the recent outbreak of H1N1 Influenza (Swine Flu), this week, Kitsap County received its allotment of antiviral medications and medical supplies from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). The purpose of the SNS is to protect the American public if there is a public health emergency that might cause local supplies to run out.

The Health District's allotment includes antiviral medications (Tamiflu and Relenza), masks, gloves, and gowns. The Health District has distributed 50% of the total Kitsap County SNS medication allotment --- enough to treat 4,300 people --- to local Rite Aid pharmacies in Kitsap County. Medications from the SNS allotment can only be distributed to patients that have prescriptions specific to the SNS. A special prescription form is required. Every doctor's office and clinic in Kitsap County will soon have these forms and be given current, accurate guidelines on when SNS medications should be prescribed.

Although currently there are no probable or confirmed cases of H1N1 flu in Kitsap County, the District, in coordination with the State of Washington, is staging medications in case there are cases that need treatment or preventative care.

Rite Aid pharmacies were selected by the District because 1) the District already has an effective partnership with Rite Aid to distribute chlamydia and gonorrhea medications through the

Expanded Partner Therapy Program, and 2) because Rite Aid has pharmacies in every community in Kitsap County including East Bremerton, West Bremerton, Bainbridge Island, Kingston, Port Orchard, Poulsbo, and Silverdale. Rite Aid is also working with public health agencies throughout the United States to distribute the SNS medications.

The amount distributed to each individual pharmacy was based on the population data of their surrounding communities. As of today, SNS medications have been delivered to every Rite Aid pharmacy in Kitsap County.

Tamiflu and Relenza is also in the *non-emergency* inventories of Kitsap pharmacies that can be used, as normally prescribed, for other influenza strains. Doctors will write prescriptions using their normal methods for these inventories.

If anyone thinks they might have the H1N1 virus, the District advises the public to use the same judgment used during a typical flu season. Do not seek medical care if you are not ill or have mild symptoms for which you would not ordinarily seek medical care. If you have more severe symptoms of fever, cough, sore throat, body aches or are feeling more seriously ill, call your health care provider to discuss your symptoms and determine if you need to be evaluated. If the following flu-like symptoms are mild, medical attention is not typically required: runny nose or nasal stuffiness; low-grade fever (<100 degrees) for less than three days; mild headache; body aches and mild stomach upset.

For additional information, contact Jessica Guidry, the Health District's Emergency Preparedness and Response Coordinator, at (360) 337-5267 office, or (360) 536-7403 cell. Additional information regarding the H1N1 flu can be found online at www.kitsapcountyhealth.com.

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