



# STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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**To:** Health Practitioners, Hospitals, Local Health Departments

**From:** NYSDOH Office of Health Emergency Preparedness (OHEP)

**HEALTH ADVISORY: NEW YORK STATE ANTIVIRAL DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM  
FOR UNINSURED AND UNDER-INSURED INDIVIDUALS**

**Please distribute to staff in the Departments of Critical Care, Emergency Medicine, Family Practice, Infection Control, Infectious Disease, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Pulmonary Medicine, and inpatient and outpatient units.**

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), in cooperation with pharmacy and other healthcare partners, has developed a program to provide affordable antiviral medications to members of the public that otherwise could not afford its retail cost. This effort involves the distribution of antiviral medication to retail pharmacies, certain federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), and a limited number of other health clinics around New York State (NYS). This program is offered as a resource for the healthcare community to use in their response to the current 2009 H1N1 influenza. The anticipated start date for this program will be December 7, 2009, and includes locations within the 57 counties of NYS (outside of New York City).

The program seeks to mitigate the effects of 2009 H1N1 influenza by providing access to oseltamivir (Tamiflu) and zanamivir (Relenza) for individuals who do not have health insurance and/or cannot afford the associated cost of obtaining a prescription. This program does not apply to those patients currently covered under Medicaid or Medicare. As with the dispensing of all prescription medications, a prescription is required to receive oseltamivir and/or zanamivir.

Uninsured and under-insured patients who are deemed by a clinician to require antiviral treatment for influenza may acquire these medications at no charge with the exception of a \$5.00 dispensing fee. Individuals that cannot afford this fee may request that it be waived. The most current NYSDOH guidance on treatment of influenza with antivirals can be found at:

[http://www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/communicable/influenza/h1n1/health\\_care\\_providers/guidance/](http://www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/communicable/influenza/h1n1/health_care_providers/guidance/)

This program includes the distribution of state stockpiles of oseltamivir (Tamiflu) 75mg, oseltamivir (Tamiflu) 45mg, oseltamivir (Tamiflu) 30mg, oseltamivir (Tamiflu) suspension, and zanamivir (Relenza) 5mg. Participating entities are not required to provide compounding services but may opt to do so at no cost to the consumer.

There is no documentation requirement for proof of eligibility. Program eligibility includes any individual that verbally states that the associated costs of obtaining prescription antiviral medications will cause a significant financial burden. Following existing regulations, family members may provide an affirmation of eligibility and obtain antiviral medications for someone under their care.

Following a brief assessment of eligibility, a medical provider may write “Dispense from NYS Stockpile” on a prescription for a patient to become automatically eligible. In addition, participating pharmacy staff may determine eligibility based on a verbal affirmation from an individual that they do not possess healthcare coverage.

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH) is conducting a similar program. For additional information about the NYCDOHMH program, please call (866) 692-3641.

The following chains have already registered to participate in the program:

- Rite Aid Pharmacy
- Price Chopper
- Stop & Shop
- Hannaford Bros. Co.
- Kinney Drugs
- Walgreens
- Duane Reade

As additional pharmacy locations register for this program this list will be updated. For additional information about this program, as well as obtaining the updated list of participating locations, please visit [www.nyhealth.gov](http://www.nyhealth.gov) starting December 7, 2009.