

For Immediate Release

Date: 12/15/2009

Who: The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

What: Sanofi-Aventis is recalling approximately 800,000 doses of its H1N1 pediatric vaccine after tests indicated it might not be potent enough to ward off the virus. These doses are approved for use in children aged six months to three years. Despite the recall, U.S. health officials do not believe children who have been given the vaccine need to be re-vaccinated.

What is being done here: The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency did not receive any of the recalled vaccine.

Background:

Doctors and Health Departments (including the Community Health Agency) were notified of the voluntary recall. Dr. Anne Schuchat, a CDC flu expert, stressed that parents don't need to do anything or to worry. The vaccine is still safe, she said.

The issue is the vaccine's strength not its safety. Tests done before the shots were shipped showed that the vaccines were strong enough. But further testing weeks later indicated the strength had fallen slightly below required levels.

The Michigan Department of Community Health is working with Health Departments in Michigan who have received doses in the recalled lots, to assure that they are no longer used.