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For More Information Contact

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**NEW RIVER HEALTH DISTRICT OFFERS FREE, DRIVE-THRU
FLU CLINIC FOR ADULTS AT RANDOLPH PARK ON SEPT. 21**

(Christiansburg, VA) – The New River Health District will offer free seasonal flu vaccine at a special drive-thru dispensing clinic on Friday, September 21, 2012 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Randolph Park, 5100 Alexander Rd. in Dublin. Only 400 doses of vaccine will be available, and will be offered to anyone 18 years and older, on a first-come, first-served basis. (Be sure to wear clothing that is loose around the arm so that a public health nurse can administer the flu shot in the upper arm, without your having to leave the comfort and convenience of your car.) In the event of rain, the drive-thru clinic will be rescheduled for Friday, Oct. 5, 2012 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the same location.

“We’ve already documented cases of influenza this season in the New River Valley, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Virginia Department of Health recommend vaccination each year for everyone 6 months and older,” said Margaret O’Dell, MD, director, New River Health District. “Vaccination is the best way to prevent influenza and its potentially severe complications, and this unique ‘drive-thru’ approach is proven to be a fast and efficient way to vaccinate a large number of folks in a short time.”

“The timing and duration of flu seasons vary - they can occur from early fall to late spring - so you should get the vaccine as soon as it’s available,” said Brenda B. Burrus, RN, MSED, nurse manager senior for the New River Health District. “It takes up to two weeks to develop the vaccine’s full protection, and the benefits last for up to a year.”

It’s especially important for certain groups of people to get vaccinated, such as:

- People with a high risk of developing serious complications like pneumonia if they get sick with the flu:
 - people with certain medical conditions including asthma, diabetes and chronic lung disease;
 - pregnant women; and
 - people 65 years and older.
- People who live with or care for others with a high risk of developing serious complications:
 - household contacts and caregivers of people with certain medical conditions including asthma, diabetes and chronic lung disease.

Influenza, commonly called “the flu,” is a serious disease caused by the influenza virus that affects the respiratory tract. It is highly contagious and generally spreads from person-to-person when an infected person coughs or sneezes. The virus can be transmitted even before flu-like

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symptoms appear. A person usually becomes sick one to three days following exposure to the virus. Typical flu symptoms include fever, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headache, muscle aches, and extreme fatigue.

Each year in the U.S. approximately 200,000 people are hospitalized due to flu illness, and flu-related deaths range from 3,000 to 49,000 each year, averaging 24,000 per year over the last three decades.

To minimize your risk of contracting or transmitting the flu, follow these simple steps:

- get vaccinated;
- wash your hands frequently and thoroughly, for at least 20 seconds;
- cover your cough, either by using a disposable tissue or coughing into your sleeve, not your hand; and
- stay at home when you are sick.

For more information, call the New River Health District at (540) 381-7100 or visit www.vdh.virginia.gov.

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