

CDC Prebooking Messages

Sanofi pasteur is aware of the frustration and concerns of many health care providers after the unprecedented response to the company's prebooking for the next influenza season. We anticipated a surge in demand for our Fluzone® influenza vaccine and had doubled our phone lines and on-line ordering systems. But the huge response - some 200,000 calls during the first eight hours of prebooking - exceeded even our expectations.

With such an unprecedented situation, we believe it will be helpful to clarify several areas of possible misunderstanding:

- First, there is influenza vaccine available for the public sector. About 25% of our influenza vaccine is reserved for public sector customers. Sanofi pasteur will be an active participant in the normal Request for Proposals (RFP) process at both the federal and state levels, and we look forward to providing influenza vaccine to this important sector.
- Second, we still have available our no-preservative vaccine in pediatric doses - 0.25 mL. Since its introduction in 2001, each year we have destroyed many doses of no-preservative influenza vaccine because we produced more no-preservative vaccine than was purchased. We currently have the capacity to produce approximately 8 million doses of our no-preservative influenza vaccine and are taking steps to increase our production capacity for the no-preservative formulations over the next several years. For example, last year, we obtained FDA approval for a new presentation of our no preservative formulation: single-dose vials. The use of vials in addition to pre-filled syringes may enable us to produce up to 10 million doses this year, but that will be predicated on demand for this product presentation, production yields and does not include late season doses. We also anticipate opening a new Formulation and Filling Facility in 2007 or 2008, and we also expect to achieve greater overall influenza vaccine capacity when our new influenza vaccine production facility is operational and approved, which we anticipate will be in 2008-2009.

- The company plans to produce approximately 50 million doses of all Fluzone vaccine formulations for U.S. distribution by the end of October. Additional doses could be produced for delivery in November or December based on demand, public health need, production yields and length of the season. The prebooking process itself is an important and early step to assess overall demand for the company's projected influenza vaccine supply before manufacturing begins. We prebook using 50 million doses as a benchmark because during an average season we have the capacity to produce that many doses. However, as we've seen during the past two influenza season, our capacity figure can be increased later in the year when we have more information about the characteristics of the viral strains and the length of the immunization season determined by overall market supply.

Given sanofi pasteur's important role as one of the major U.S. influenza vaccine manufacturers, we go to great lengths to provide as equitable distribution as possible of influenza vaccine across all segments of the health care community. However, we are unable to supply the entire U.S. influenza vaccine market. We are gratified that customers recognize sanofi pasteur's reliability as a supplier of influenza vaccine, and we regret the frustration and inconvenience that providers experienced trying to reach us. Customers who have questions can reach us at 1-800-VACCINE (1-800-822-2463). www.vaccineshoppe.com

Sanofi pasteur does not have the capacity to supply the entire market and public comments from other manufacturers indicate that there could be as many 68 million more doses available, beyond what sanofi pasteur plans to make. Please be aware that the distributors of these additional manufacturers of influenza vaccine are currently pre-booking influenza vaccine. Individuals should contact those organizations if they were unable to pre-book with sanofi pasteur.