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PRESS RELEASE

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IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO VACCINATE ***National Influenza Vaccination Week Highlights*** ***the Importance of Getting a Flu Vaccine***

(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.) – The Santa Barbara County Public Health Department is joining with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to observe National Influenza Vaccination Week, December 2 – December 9, 2018. National Influenza Vaccination week is a national awareness campaign focused on highlighting the importance of continuing flu vaccination through the holiday season and beyond.

CDC recommends getting vaccinated by the end of October so that people are more likely to be protected against the flu when activity picks up in the community, however, vaccination into December and beyond can be beneficial during most flu seasons, including this one. Flu season most often peaks between December and March, but activity can occur as late as May. “As long as flu viruses are spreading and causing illness, vaccination should continue throughout the flu season in order to protect as many people as possible against the flu” said Dr. Peter Hasler, Santa Barbara County Deputy Health Officer.

An annual flu vaccination is the best way to prevent the flu and flu-related complications that could lead to hospitalization, and at times can lead to death. A flu vaccine is not only important for protecting yourself but also for protecting your friends and family members. Health experts across the country recommend that everyone 6 months of age and older, including pregnant women, get a flu vaccine.

Flu vaccines are available from your doctor and at many retail pharmacies. Many employers, schools, colleges and universities also offer flu vaccines. Next time you see a sign that says, “Get Your Flu Vaccine Here,” stop in and get one, and encourage your friends and family to do the same. You can also find a flu vaccination clinic near you with the vaccine finder at <http://vaccine.healthmap.org/>.

Flu shots are covered by Medi-Cal, Medicare, and by most insurance plans. Please check with your insurance provider for coverage details.

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