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NEW STUDY FINDS H1N1 AFFECTED EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT WORKERS MORE THAN ANY OTHER HOSPITAL EMPLOYEE

Findings Published in AMA's New and Improved Disaster Preparedness Journal

CHICAGO – During the H1N1 pandemic almost half of the reported H1N1 cases in hospital health care workers occurred in emergency medicine, pediatrics, ambulatory care and anesthesiology, with emergency medicine workers having the highest infection rate. This is according to new findings published today in the American Medical Association's (AMA) *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness* journal.

“The peak of the H1N1 pandemic in health care personnel lagged slightly behind the peak of the pandemic in the community, except in the emergency department – where the peak closely corresponded to the community,” said study lead author Cynthia Santos, Emergency Preparedness Research Fellow of Weill Cornell Medical School. “This suggests that emergency department workers were at the forefront of the pandemic, and we hope that this study will be of value for medical directors to identify the workers most vulnerable to H1N1.”

Employee data from five hospitals prior to vaccination were analyzed according to departmental unit during the spring 2009 H1N1 pandemic. A total of 123 lab confirmed cases of H1N1 were found. The study found that 49 percent of the H1N1 cases occurred in hospital departments that together comprised 19 percent of the total health care workers. The health care workers in this group are emergency medicine, pediatrics, ambulatory care, intensive care units and anesthesiology.

The AMA also announced today that it is the exclusive publisher and distributor of the AMA's *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness*, formerly published by Lippincott, Williams and Wilkins. The journal's Web site will remain the same (www.dmphp.org), but a more sophisticated platform is being developed to help improve the journal's visibility and engagement with the medical and public health community. The journal will continue to publish ahead of print important studies that can help emergency response health care professionals.

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Editor's Note: To obtain complete online access to the journal, contact AMA Media Relations at (312) 464-4813 and provide appropriate press credentials. The AMA's *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness* journal maintains editorial independence and the statements and opinions in the journal, including the articles referenced above, are not those of the AMA.

About AMA's Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness Journal

The AMA Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness journal was created to promote public health preparedness and the science of disaster medicine. It is the first comprehensive, peer-reviewed publication emphasizing public health preparedness and disaster response. The journal is published by the American Medical Association and an online version can be found on the web at www.dmphp.org. For information about individual subscriptions contact the AMA Unified Service Center at 800-262-2350. Institutions wishing to order may contact journalsales@ama-assn.org. Follow the AMA Disaster

Medicine and Public Health journal and other AMA news on Twitter at:
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