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NEWS RELEASE

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California Hospitals Launch H1N1 Public Service Announcement Campaign

PSAs Offer Vital Information for Adults, Children in English, Spanish Versions

SACRAMENTO (October 19, 2009) – As preparations for the H1N1 flu season kick into high gear, California’s community hospitals have launched a statewide public education and media campaign.

The California Hospital Association (CHA) has produced a series of public service announcements (PSAs) aimed at educating all Californians about the signs and symptoms of the H1N1 flu virus, and what individuals should do if they become ill. Four 60-second television spots have been produced — two in English and two in Spanish. One PSA is intended for parents of school-age children, while another is geared for adults.

“California’s community hospitals are on the frontlines of care, especially when it comes to responding to a public health crisis such as the H1N1 pandemic,” said CHA President and CEO C. Duane Dauner. “Although no one yet knows how rapidly the H1N1 flu may spread or how serious the illness may become, it’s essential that all Californians are aware of the signs and symptoms of the virus in order to protect themselves and their families.”

The PSAs feature hospital emergency room physicians who describe the typical symptoms of the H1N1 flu virus, as well as the warning signs of a more severe case of the illness. Among the more common symptoms are fever, sore throat, stuffy or runny nose, headaches, body aches, chills and fatigue. According to the PSAs, patients with these symptoms should stay home, get lots of rest and drink plenty of fluids.

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HOSPITALS LAUNCH H1N1 PSA CAMPAIGN

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Warning signs for complications from the H1N1 virus include difficulty breathing, persistent vomiting, chest pain or sudden dizziness. In children, parents should also be alert to bluish or gray skin color or if the child does not wake up easily or poorly interacts with others. If patients exhibit any of these signs, according to the spots, they should call their physician immediately.

The PSAs are being distributed to all English and Spanish language television stations throughout California. The spots are expected to air for the next several weeks. The PSAs also can be viewed on CHA's public education and advocacy website: www.ProtectMyER.com.

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