



# Clinton County Medical Reserve Corps



Volume 2, Issue 2 September 2009 Published semiannually by the **Clinton County Health Department** [www.clintonhealth.org](http://www.clintonhealth.org)

## New Volunteer Coordinator!

Hello! I wanted to take a moment to introduce myself. My name is Suzanne LaBorde. I am a Public Health Nurse II and the new Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer Coordinator for Clinton County.

I have been with the Clinton County Health Department since September of 2005. I am excited to be working with all of you! As volunteers you are a very important part of our emergency response

structure. I am hoping to increase the communication between all of you and myself, provide you with opportunities to meet one another, learn more about your role as a volunteer, and increase your access to the tools that will make CCMRC a successful public service organization.

I will be keeping you up to date by e-mail, mostly, so if your contact information has changed please let me know.

It is also very important that you update your information through the NYSERV website.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns! I can be reached by phone at 565-4848 or by e-mail at [labordes@co.clinton.ny.us](mailto:labordes@co.clinton.ny.us).

**For up-to-date emergency information sign up now at: [www.nyalert.gov](http://www.nyalert.gov) or call 1-800-697-6972.**

## A Call to Service

This will likely be one of the most active vaccine seasons that the medical community has seen in a long time! As public health providers we know how vital a trained, dedicated group of volunteers is to maintaining the health and well being of our community.

You receive this newsletter because you have signed on to be one of these individuals and we thank you! However, this may leave many of you asking yourself "what does this mean to me?"

In a letter to MRC Leaders and Volunteers, Acting Deputy Surgeon General Robert C. Williams, "As we plan to and prepare for the upcoming seasonal flu season and the very real potential for widespread transmission of pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza, there is no doubt that volunteers will be needed in all communities... You will play an integral role in the health and safety of your towns, cities, counties and

states."

As an MRC volunteer you may be asked to assist with a variety of different roles. Some volunteers will help with the initial prep work: getting supplies gathered together or informational packets made. Others will be participating in mass vaccination clinics, providing education and guidance to community members or triaging sick patients by phone.

In order to manage our volunteers, it is important that all of our information is up to date. If you have not added employment hours to your profile, it would be helpful if you would do so. If you plan to be out of town/unavailable for a period of time notifying CCMRC allows us to inactivate you. **You** won't get calls and **we** will have a list of available volunteers!

Also, please remember to put in place a personal emergency plan. How do you plan to take care of you family and pets if

volunteers are activated. Do you have emergency supplies at home? Do you have adequate surplus supplies of food and water? The better prepared you are the more able you will be to assist in an emergency.

Finally, recruit, recruit, recruit! We continue to actively seek volunteers that have medical/EMS certifications. If you have a friend or family member that has the desire and willingness to volunteer to help their community in a crisis please direct him/her to the Health Department website where they can follow the link to sign up.



MRC Junior Volunteers help spread the Emergency Preparedness message during the Battle of Plattsburgh Parade.

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## Upcoming Volunteer Opportunity

**Seasonal Flu Vaccine Orientation  
September 29, 2009  
Clinton County Health Dept.  
2nd Floor Meeting Room  
133 Margaret St, Plattsburgh**

The Clinton County Health Department will be hosting seasonal flu vaccine clinics starting 9/24/2009. We are looking for volunteers to help with morning, afternoon, and evening hours.

There will be opportunities to assist with forms distribution, education regarding types of vaccine available and who gets them, as well as vaccination.

Please contact Suzanne LaBorde at 565-4848 if you are interested in helping.

The Clinton County Health Department will be hosting County-wide Rabies Clinics in September and October from 6:00-8:30 pm.

Activities include dispersing literature regarding pets and emergencies, and interaction with pet owners.

Anyone interested in helping should contact Penny Maynard at 565-4870.

# Spotlight

In this section of our semi-annual newsletter, we'd like to bring you relevant and cutting news tidbits related to the operation of MRC's, the training of our members, and some of the problems we're likely to encounter. We encourage you, our readers, to become proactive here, telling us what you'd like to learn about, or better yet, contributing to this effort.

## NYS Mandates Influenza Vaccine for Healthcare Workers!

By now most of you are probably aware that the New York State Department of Health has amended Article 10 of the Public Health Law to include vaccination with Influenza vaccine. What this means is that healthcare workers working in Article 28, Article 36 or Article 40 governed facilities will be required to receive Influenza vaccine(s) annually.

Vaccine mandation for healthcare workers is not a new concept. Many vaccines are already required for a healthcare worker to safely and effectively perform their job duties. Influenza hospitalizes 200,000 Americans each year and it is responsible for approximately 36,000 deaths annually. Unfortunately influenza vaccine is not afforded the same "respect" that other vaccines receive because, up until now, it has always been optional. If you ask me, it makes good sense to expect healthcare workers to protect the health of themselves and their patients.

Research has shown that influenza transmission begins 1-2 days before

the infected person develops symptoms of influenza. As healthcare workers, with direct contact to immune compromised individuals, we are a great transmission vehicle.

Research also shows that flu outbreaks in healthcare facilities coincide with lack of vaccinated healthcare workers. As healthcare workers our mission is to protect and improve the health of our community.

Clinton County Medical Reserve Corps will require that all of our volunteers be vaccinated for both seasonal and H1N1 influenza in order to be activated in an emergency. While employers are able to have the option of reassignment to non-care positions, the same is not true of volunteers. As an MRC volunteer your job will be to assist community members in times of need. Some of these individuals have chronic illness, some are immunosuppressed, all of them have the right to remain healthy!

Volunteers that have a legitimate and documented medical exemption and

cannot receive the influenza vaccine, can print the medical exemption form available on the NY State Dept. of Health Website at the following web address:

<http://www.nyhealth.gov/forms/doh-4482.pdf>. This form must be signed by a medical provider and submitted to the CCMRC Volunteer Coordinator. In some cases, arrangements can then be made to protect you and the client.

As an MRC Volunteer, Clinton County Health Department will provide you with the required vaccinations to ensure that we have a ready workforce! Vaccinations can be received at the September 29th orientation program or at a clinic site during the start of you volunteer shift.

Please be sure to have a copy of your proof of vaccination on you when you arrive at the site of deployment. This will ensure that you are able to be deployed ASAP. You can also mail a copy to MRC at 133 Margaret St. Plattsburgh, NY 12901.



Clinton County Health Department  
133 Margaret Street  
Plattsburgh, NY 12901



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

