

Henry Schein Increases Influenza Vaccine Availability to 19 Million Doses

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Company to Have Reliable Supply for 10th Straight Year in Its Quest to Help Curb the 'Single Most Vaccine-Preventable Disease'

MELVILLE, N.Y.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Aug. 8, 2003-- Henry Schein, Inc. (Nasdaq: HSIC) today announced that it has begun to ship what it anticipates to be more than 19 million doses of influenza vaccine for the 2003-2004 influenza season--an 11 percent increase from last year. While the Company will distribute influenza vaccine from the two manufacturers that have Food and Drug Administration approval, the bulk of the doses that it ships to office-based physicians and other customers in the United States are expected to be Fluvirin influenza vaccine from Chiron Vaccines, a business unit of Chiron Corporation, based in Emeryville, California. As one of the leading distributors of vaccines in the United States and the largest provider of healthcare supplies to office-based practitioners in the combined North American and European markets, Henry Schein's shipments of vaccine to its customers began weeks prior to the October start date that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends for vaccination.

It is hoped that this increased supply will help address the immunization disparity that exists among African-American adults, which is the subject of a CDC press briefing today at the 2003 National Association of Black Journalists annual convention in Dallas where the CDC announced the 10 cities identified for an enhanced influenza education campaign this season. "Educating underserved populations or segments of our society where there historically has been resistance to influenza vaccination is an important step in the process," said Louis W. Sullivan, M.D., former U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, and a member of Henry Schein's Board of Directors. "Equally important is ensuring that sufficient doses of influenza vaccine are available for distribution to healthcare providers, and I am pleased that Henry Schein has taken a lead role in making this happen."

Ensuring a Reliable Source of Influenza Vaccine

This is the 10th straight year that Henry Schein has provided a reliable supply of influenza vaccine. "Year after year, our customers rely on us to provide influenza vaccine for use with their high-risk patients as early as possible into the flu season," said Michael Racioppi, RPh, President, Medical Group, Henry Schein. "This is a responsibility that we take very seriously. Thanks to the long-term arrangements we have entered into with Chiron, we have been able to ensure that an even greater flu vaccine supply is available to customers who pre-book with Henry Schein, and that physicians will receive the vaccine in plenty of time to schedule vaccinations for October and November. We hope this early abundance of vaccine will mean that more Americans will receive vaccinations. In addition, we are once again making preservative-free single-dose syringes available, which will allow pregnant women and others who might be sensitive to the preservative to receive vaccinations."

"As the world's second largest producer of flu vaccine, we are extremely pleased that we can continue Fluvirin's strong track record of delivery early in the year," said Kevin Bryett, Vice President, Commercial Operations for Chiron. "Ensuring that our customers have a reliable supply of flu vaccine is our top priority, and therefore as we continue to expand our production capacity, the ongoing commitment of Henry Schein, our major distributor in the United States, will help ensure that we continue to deliver more doses early in the season when patients at high risk can benefit most."

Early Vaccination for "At-Risk" Patients Recommended by CDC

According to the CDC, patients at risk for complications from influenza include those 65 years and older; those under 65 who have underlying chronic illnesses; children under nine who are receiving flu vaccine for the first time; children age 6-23 months; household contacts and caregivers for those considered high risk; and health care workers.

These individuals should seek out vaccination by a physician as soon as vaccine is available, preferably in October or November. In addition, the CDC also recommends vaccination for people between the ages of 50 and 64 because this group has an increased prevalence of persons with high-risk conditions.

"Influenza is the single most vaccine-preventable disease we know of," explained Dr. McElhaney. "It is extremely important that physicians receive influenza vaccine in their offices as soon as possible so they can be assured of an adequate supply of vaccine and appropriate timing of vaccination for those who are 'high-risk' in accordance with the CDC guidelines. Physicians should already have begun scheduling patients for office visits, but knowing that they will have the vaccine in hand weeks in advance, they should have the confidence to make sure all of their patients are scheduled for the entire season."

According to information presented at the May 2003 National Influenza Summit, approximately 66 percent of the 45 million Americans between the ages of 50 and 64 do not receive the flu vaccine, while approximately 85 percent of Americans aged 20 to 50 go unvaccinated. Dr. McElhaney believes that many patients do not receive a vaccination because they may not be correctly identified as "high-risk," including people who suffer from coronary artery disease or congestive heart failure, chronic obstructive lung disease, emphysema, asthma or diabetes. At the same time, there may be a misperception that vaccination later in the season is not useful.

"Although 'high-risk' patients are encouraged to receive their vaccine in October or November, it is still clinically beneficial for these patients as well as everyone else, to receive the influenza vaccine through December and January, if they have not received it earlier," said Dr. McElhaney. "Physicians and patients should recognize the clinical importance of late-season flu vaccination for those not at risk, and be more willing to administer and receive the vaccine later in the season--after Thanksgiving and through January--to the healthy population. Physicians also should stress to their patients who are reluctant to receive the vaccine, that they cannot get the flu from the vaccine, because it does not contain the live virus."

For more information on the 2003-2004 supply and to place an order, physicians are encouraged to call (800) 772-4346 to speak with a Henry Schein representative. Orders can also be placed through the Company's Web site at www.henryschein.com. To review the CDC recommendations, please see <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/who.htm>.

About Henry Schein

Recognized for its excellent customer service and low prices, Henry Schein serves more than 400,000 customers worldwide, including dental

practices and laboratories, physician practices and veterinary clinics, as well as government and other institutions. The Company operates its four business groups--Dental, Medical, International and Technology--through a centralized and automated distribution network, which provides customers in more than 125 countries with a comprehensive selection of over 90,000 national and Henry Schein private-brand products. Henry Schein also offers a wide range of innovative value-added practice solutions, including such leading practice management software systems as DENTRIX(R) and Easy Dental(R) for dental practices, and AVImark(R) for veterinary clinics, which are installed in over 50,000 practices; and ArubA(R), Henry Schein's electronic catalog and ordering system.

Headquartered in Melville, New York, Henry Schein employs over 7,000 people in 16 countries. The Company's 2002 sales reached a record \$2.8 billion. For more information, visit the Henry Schein Web site at www.henryschein.com.

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