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SASKATCHEWAN CANCER AGENCY

INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION CLINICS AVAILABLE FOR CANCER PATIENTS

Cancer patients currently receiving treatment are encouraged to get a flu shot through the Allan Blair Cancer Centre in Regina or the Saskatoon Cancer Centre. The vaccine is offered free of charge to patients and will be available starting October 11, 2012.

"Providing safe, quality care and ensuring that we are providing the services that our patients need are our priorities," Scott Livingstone, CEO of the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency said. "Providing the vaccine to patients in our cancer centres is a safe and effective way for patients to protect themselves against the flu virus."

The influenza vaccination clinics for cancer patients will run from October 11 until November 9, 2012. Flu shots will also be available to immediate family or caregivers of patients.

"Ensuring our patients and everyone who helps support them gets immunized is really about providing the best care possible," Livingstone said.

The best time for patients who are currently receiving chemotherapy to get the vaccine is 48 hours prior to or after treatment when a blood count has been done to determine platelet and white blood cell counts. Cancer patients should not receive the vaccine if they are allergic to any of the vaccine components or if they have a platelet count below 20,000.

Along with getting a flu shot people should be diligent about frequently washing their hands, using proper cough and sneeze etiquette, keeping common surfaces disinfected and staying home when they are sick.

For information on the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency visit www.saskcancer.ca.

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For more information, contact:

Mary Deane

Public Affairs

Saskatchewan Cancer Agency

Regina

Phone: (306) 791-2770