

About 350 turn out for vaccine clinic



Written by Mandy Hochstedler

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The early arrival of the seasonal flu vaccine in the area this year spurred a lower-than-expected turnout at the Logan County Health District's mass vaccination flu clinic Saturday, officials said.

About 350 people were vaccinated at the clinic at the health district, as compared to the 600 to 800 people who have showed up at clinics conducted at area schools in previous years.

"The pharmacies were able to start giving it before we were this year," Kay Schroer, LCHD interim nursing director, said of the

vaccine.

"We're glad that people are being proactive. We don't care where they are getting it."

Additional walk-in seasonal flu shot clinics will be conducted from 1:30 to 4 p.m. Mondays and Thursdays beginning today.

Health district employees in all departments worked at the clinic Saturday, serving in various capacities, from nurses giving shots to others helping with internal traffic control and outdoor parking. In addition, a total of 21 volunteers staffed the event, and included local members of the Medical Reserve Corps, Citizens Corps and Community Emergency Response Team.

The volunteers are medical and non-medical professionals in the area, including doctors, pharmacists, teachers, and social workers, who are recruited and trained to help out in the time of an emergency, said Marsha Bowsher, Logan County MRC coordinator. For more information about how to join the MRC, CERT or Citizens Corps, visit www.serveohio.org.

Boy Scouts Chris Davis and Nick Davis of Bellefontaine and Justin Davis of West Liberty from Troop 182 distributed packets to individuals after they received their shots. The packets, made available by grants from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, included tissues, facial masks, hand sanitizer and tips for preventing the spread of the seasonal flu and H1N1.

The boys assembled the packets at home prior to the clinic.

"It's good information for people to know so that they stay safe," Nick said.

Ms. Schroer said volunteers have assisted with mass vaccination clinics in years past, but their help was especially needed this year because the agency has endured a number of staff cuts following failed levy attempts.

"When our numbers are already low, it's great that we have the volunteers to call on. They didn't hesitate when we really needed them."

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Joel Penhorwood, 15, of West Mansfield, left, watches as Leigh Barnes, home health nurse, prepares swabs his arm prior to receiving a flu shot Saturday at the Logan County Health District's mass vaccination clinic. (Examiner | M.Hochstedler)