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To: All Local Media

From: R. Joseph Ebel, RS, MS, MBA
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Contact: Nancy Hanger RN, Director of Nursing

Subject: Not Too Late to Get a Flu Vaccine

As the 2011 begins, we often assess goals and ambitions for the New Year. We made it through the holidays and so far, we've kept up with our busy lifestyle. If you received your annual flu vaccine last fall, all well and good. You are on the right track for preventing getting the flu. If you haven't received a flu vaccine, it's not too late!

The Licking County Health Department, with the cooperation of local hospitals and physicians offices, monitors flu cases on a weekly basis. Before 2011 began, only a few cases were reported each week. In the first week of 2011, this is starting to increase. This is following the normal trends for flu outbreaks being seen in other areas of the United States.

Who should get the vaccine? Anyone over the age of 6 months is eligible. Young children, adults over 65, or anyone with health issues such as diabetes, heart disease, etc. are at increased risk of suffering secondary problems from the flu such as pneumonia. Children under 9 who have never been vaccinated for the flu need two doses a month apart, all others need only one vaccine. The vaccines are available at the Licking County Health Department as well as other locations.

Call the Licking County Health Department at 740-349-6535 for information on receiving the flu vaccine or visit www.lickingcohealth.org for a complete list of health department services. Bring in a mercury thermometer to the Health Department and you will receive a new digital thermometer in exchange for free.