



UN health agency set to receive 50 million H1N1 vaccines for developing countries



The H1N1 vaccine is being donated to developing nations [File Photo]

10 November 2009 – A giant pharmaceutical company is slated to donate 50 million doses of the pandemic H1N1 vaccine to the United Nations public health arm, the World Health Organization (**WHO**) **announced** today.

Under a new agreement signed with GlaxoSmithKline, WHO expects to receive the first shipments of the vaccine by the end of November.

WHO has a list of 95 developing countries that are eligible to receive donated vaccines, and aims to secure enough vaccines to cover 10 per cent of the population of these countries.

“We welcome this very generous donation by GlaxoSmithKline, which will go to protect the health of the world’s poorest people,” said WHO Director-General Margaret after signing the agreement at the agency’s Headquarters in Geneva.

“This is a real gesture of global solidarity towards those who would not be otherwise able to have access to the vaccine,” said Ms Chan. “WHO will now work to see that these vaccines are distributed to those who need them.”

Last week, WHO warned that the world has not yet hit the peak influenza season between January and February when more cases are expected. The agency also stressed that despite concerns about the side effects of the vaccine, it remains one of the best tools available to fight the virus.

As of 1 November, there have been more than 482,000 laboratory confirmed cases of pandemic influenza H1N1 worldwide and over 6,000 deaths reported to WHO. As many countries have stopped counting individual cases, particularly of milder illness, the actual number of people contracting the virus is likely to be higher than the number of confirmed cases.

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