# DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

**OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATION**
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
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## Health Alert:
## County of San Bernardino Experiences Increase in Flu-Related Deaths

The County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health has confirmed an increase in flu-related deaths this flu season. Flu activity continues to increase statewide; the number of confirmed flu-related deaths within San Bernardino County has increased from 2 to 16 since January 10, 2014. The deceased range from 29-64 years of age. The majority of the fatalities occurred in individuals 40-59 years of age. The confirmed deaths are scattered throughout the County with no specific regional trend. Of the 16 deaths, 13 are confirmed to have been infected with the 2009 H1N1 strain that caused the 2009-2010 H1N1 pandemic. During the 2009-2010 H1N1 pandemic, the County reported a total of 45 flu-related deaths. The total number of deaths reported for the entire 2012-2013 influenza season in the County of San Bernardino was 5.

"This flu season is severe and may be peaking earlier in comparison to previous seasons. Everyone who has not yet had a flu vaccination is encouraged to do so immediately. The influenza vaccine remains the most effective way to protect oneself from the flu," stated Dr. Maxwell Ohikhuare, Health Officer of County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health. The influenza vaccine is available at all County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health clinics. A seasonal flu shot is recommended every year for those age 6 months and older. All of the 2013-2014 flu vaccines provide protection against the 2009 H1N1 strain.

People who are ill should take actions to stop the spread of germs such as:

- While sick, limit contact with others
- Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based rub
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth

According to the California Department of Public Health, "Those at highest risk - the elderly, pregnant women, infants, or those with other health conditions - who show flu symptoms should contact their physician immediately in order to get the most effective treatment. Symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches and fatigue. "

Continuous health information can be found on the Communicable Disease Section Facebook page at http://www.facebook/CommunicableDiseaseSection. For information about community clinic locations and times, please visit the County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health website at www.sbcounty.gov/dph or call the Communicable Disease Section at 1-800-722-4794, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. to find a location near you.

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