

SMALLPOX VACCINATION CLINICS OPEN

Local hospitals and health departments form response teams

B.E.R.T. Update 0002

February 5, 2003

This Friday all five smallpox vaccination sites in Missouri will begin vaccinating volunteers from local public health departments and acute care hospitals as part of Stage 1 of President Bush's Smallpox Vaccination Program. The five sites include Columbia-Boone County, Butler County, Kansas City, St. Louis County and Springfield-Greene County.

The media will be invited to attend a special event in order to collect footage or still photos of the vaccination process and conduct interviews. This is the only time media will be allowed access to the vaccination clinics, due to confidentiality issues.

The media event at the Springfield-Greene County Health Department (227 E. Chestnut Expressway) will take place Friday, February 7 at 1:00 pm. All media in Homeland Security Regions D, G and I are welcome to attend.

Statewide, 99 hospitals and 107 local public health agencies (LPHA) responded to the government's call for volunteers to receive the smallpox vaccination. The Springfield-Greene County Health Department will be vaccinating approximately 200 volunteers from 12 hospitals and 18 LPHAs from Regions D, F, G and I. These Stage 1 vaccinations will take place throughout the months of February and March.

Stage 2 of the Smallpox Vaccination Program, as defined by President Bush, will include first responders, law enforcement, fire and EMS. No guidelines as to when Stage 2 will begin, where the vaccinations will be given, or how many volunteers may participate have been handed down yet. We will forward that information on to you as soon as it becomes available.

However, it is not too early for first responders, fire, law enforcement and EMS to begin considering whether or not they will volunteer for the vaccinations. Departments also need to be considering policies, workman's comp and liability issues. Information on the vaccine, contraindications, and potential adverse reactions is available from the Region D Bioterrorism / Emergency Response Team (BERT). Call (417) 864-1085 to request an information packet or a group presentation from the team.

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