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HEPATITIS A SECOND DOSE RECOMMENDED IN COMING MONTHS FOR THOSE VACCINATED DURING 2016 OUTBREAK

HONOLULU – In August 2016, the Hawaii Department of Health (DOH) identified raw scallops imported from the Philippines as the source of the hepatitis A outbreak, which sickened hundreds of Hawaii residents. According to data from the Hawaii Immunization Registry, healthcare providers reported 90,259 hepatitis A vaccinations were administered in the state between July and November 2016. Vaccine manufacturers estimate more than 100,000 doses were distributed to Hawaii providers during the outbreak.

“The response from the community during the outbreak was tremendous,” said Health Director Dr. Virginia Pressler. “Healthcare providers, including pharmacists, played a key role in ensuring hepatitis A vaccine was available for those needing and wanting to be vaccinated. They truly rose to the challenge of vaccinating a large number of people in a relatively short amount of time.”

“Hepatitis A outbreaks will continue to occur worldwide and a local outbreak could occur again,” warned State Epidemiologist Dr. Sarah Park. “While one dose of hepatitis A vaccine provides good protection, two doses are necessary for nearly 100 percent protection and lasting immunity. We’d like to remind people now, if they received their

first dose during the outbreak, to get their second dose at least six months after the first one was administered.”

DOH is recommending those who are due for their second dose of the hepatitis A vaccine contact their healthcare provider or pharmacy to schedule a vaccination appointment. If choosing to be vaccinated at a pharmacy, the public is encouraged to return to the same pharmacy that administered their first dose of vaccine to receive their second dose. This allows the pharmacy to use an existing physician prescription and ensure the vaccine is administered at least six months after the first vaccination. Those not returning to the same location for vaccination should provide documentation of their first dose, if possible, and contact their physician if a prescription is needed. To ensure vaccine availability, contact your healthcare provider or pharmacy in advance.

To locate a vaccinating pharmacy or clinic near you, visit <http://health.hawaii.gov/docd/where-to-get-your-adult-and-flu-vaccinations/> or call the Aloha United Way information and referral line at 2-1-1.

Additional information about hepatitis A is available at <http://health.hawaii.gov/docd/dib/disease/hepatitis-a/>.

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