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One-Third of International Physicians Anticipate H1N1 Vaccine Shortage *42 percent making preparations to treat higher numbers this fall*

October 06, 2009 (Radnor, PA) — More than one-third of international physicians polled in a recent survey say they anticipate a shortage of the H1N1 vaccine this fall in their country, with nearly half of respondents in adult primary care and pediatrics reporting increased preparations to treat larger numbers of patients with seasonal flu and H1N1. The findings were part of a survey administered by HTH Worldwide, a global health and safety services company, to its international community of physicians and health care providers.

Two-thirds of the English-speaking doctors representing 53 international countries polled also expect an adequate supply of the seasonal flu vaccine in their country this year, dispelling concerns that the production of the H1N1 vaccine could interfere with regular production of the seasonal flu vaccine. However physicians from developing countries are more pessimistic about expecting shortages of both vaccines this fall.

Additionally, more than half believe there will not be a shortage of Oseltamivir, or Tamiflu as it is more commonly known, a popular antiviral drug that is used to reduce the severity and duration of H1N1 symptoms. Nearly all of the 112 respondents said their patients are expecting to obtain Oseltamivir through prescription at a retail pharmacy or through a government-operated facility.

The majority of respondents are advising patients who believe they are infected with H1N1 in their areas to schedule an appointment with a private physician or visit a public health facility designated specifically to treat those with H1N1.

“Though it’s quite concerning that more than a third of the international physicians we polled expect a shortage of the H1N1 vaccine, it’s encouraging that many expect their patients to be vaccinated. It’s also gratifying to see that HTH-contracted physicians are making special preparations to treat H1N1 patients.” said Angelo Masciantonio, Chief Executive Officer, HTH Worldwide. “HTH-covered patients, use our online and mobile tools to access thousands of doctors around the world. If they contract H1N1 overseas, or are affected by any illness or injury, they have access to the best care available.”

About HTH Worldwide

HTH Worldwide provides health insurance plans and global medical assistance services for business and leisure travelers as well as students abroad. HTH programs are distinguished by a contracted community of over 5,000 hospitals and doctors in 180 countries. HTH combines its health and safety research, advanced Internet and mobile applications, and extensive experience in designing and delivering international health insurance plans to ensure customers’ health, safety and peace of mind. HTH was recently named one of North America’s fastest growing companies in Deloitte’s Technology Fast 500. For more information, visit www.hthworldwide.com.