

Job Action Sheet: Non-Medical Observer

Version 10/26/2009

Position Summary

Will assist individuals who have minor complaints after receiving H1N1 vaccinations. This may include assisting people to a chair or cot in the observation area, providing refreshments to those who are feeling light-headed or faint, or bringing a basin to people complaining of nausea. Will observe these individuals for any changes in their status and will immediately notify a medical team member of any adverse changes in patient status.

Supervised by

Observation Leader

Qualifications

Able to stand for long periods of time. Able to lift up to 25 pounds. Able to assist individuals with minor medical issues, such as nausea or vomiting.

Responsibilities

Prior to assigned clinic

1. Review this Job Action Sheet and the following references prior to your first shift.
 - a. [Overview of Mass Vaccination Clinic](#)
 - b. Clinic Layout ([The Ranch](#), [Lincoln Middle School](#), [Thompson Valley High School](#))
 - c. List of [Supplies for Post Vaccination Observation Area](#)
2. If unfamiliar with the Incident Command System, we recommend you take the on-line FEMA training course ICS 100.a (<http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/is100a.asp>).
3. If you have to cancel or change your shift, contact Jen Ramsey at 530-2738.
4. Arrive at the clinic site on time. The first hour will include check-in and briefing by your supervisor.

During clinic

1. Receive on-site briefing from supervisor.
2. Locate restrooms, exits, the first aid area (if available), and the storage area for refreshments. Locate the supplies you may need (wheel chairs, gloves, Band-Aids, ice compresses, cloths to moisten with water, emesis basins).

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3. Be aware of the potential vaccine reactions that may occur in the first few minutes after vaccination. You are the “eyes” and “ears” of the Medical Observers.
 - a. Following “the shot” there may be:
 - i. Soreness at the injection site: Offer a cold compress. Encourage them to move their arm.
 - ii. Bleeding at the injection site: With slight bleeding apply a Band-Aid or add a layer of gauze pads with direct pressure; with continuous bleeding, add a layer of gauze pads with firm direct pressure and call the Medical Observer.
 - iii. Near-fainting or fainting. NOTE: this is particularly common in teenagers, especially females, but can happen to anyone before, during or after getting “the shot”.
 1. *Watch carefully* for signs of distress as shot recipients get up from sitting at the vaccination station. Extreme paleness, sweating, or yawning are imminent warning signs that the person may faint. They may complain of nausea, weakness, lightheadedness, dizziness or visual problems.
 2. If you note any of these signs, go to the person and ask if they are OK. Encourage them to *immediately sit with head between legs or lie down flat* on the floor (if they are not next to a chair, don’t waste seconds walking them to one—it may be too late). Call the Medical Observer.
 3. The risk of fainting comes from injuries sustained in falling, particularly head injuries. Be prepared to help control their fall if you don’t reach them in time to prevent a faint. Anyone who falls, whether or not they lose consciousness, should be evaluated by the Medical Observer and/or the EMS paramedic before attempting to move them.
 4. Persons who sustain a faint or near-faint will need to wait in the Observation Area until their symptoms completely resolve. This may take 15 or 20 minutes or more. Offer them clear liquids or other refreshments as they recover. The Medical Observer will need to discharge them.
 - b. Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction that may occur within minutes after receiving either type of flu vaccine. It is extremely rare, but we have to be prepared to recognize it because it is life-threatening and readily treatable. Be aware of these signs and if someone complains of any one of them, immediately call the Medical Observer or EMS:

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Itching and/or redness of the skin all over the body, hives, swelling of the lips, face or throat, wheezing or shortness of breath or collapsing/passing out.

4. People may have questions. Answer the questions you can and refer technical questions to the Medical Observer.
5. Wearing gloves is recommended. Hands are to be washed or sanitized before and after removing gloves or contacting patients or contaminated surfaces. Wash hands with soap and water when visibly dirty or soiled. You may use alcohol-based hand sanitizers when hands are not visibly soiled.
6. Report possible exposures to blood or body fluids to your supervisor immediately, wash with soap and water and receive further instructions from your supervisor.
7. Report any security/safety issues immediately to your supervisor or security staff. Document incidents appropriately.

After clinic

Return your vest, name badge and equipment or materials you were issued and check out at the staffing check-in/check-out area before leaving the clinic.