

10-26-16 County Judges Article

FLU SHOTS

It is flu season again. This year the Milam County Health Department is giving flu shots in more locations throughout the county with flu shot clinics as well as in our permanent clinics in Cameron and Rockdale. It's important to get your flu shot like any other vaccine because they are developed to protect us from dangerous and often fatal diseases. The Center for Disease Control estimates that annually 35,000 people lose their lives to the flu.

To date the Health Department has provided over three hundred forty flu vaccinations which puts them half way to their goal of seven hundred sixty for the season. The clinics that they have conducted so far have been a success having been conducted at this year's Senior EXPO our at the Cameron VFW, another was conducted in Thorndale at the Senior Citizens Center, and another at the Davilla Community Center, all accounting for about one third of the shots provided so far this year. Approximately half of our county employees have received their flu shots with private businesses, the ISDs, and walk-in clients accounting for another 150 or so shots given to date.

If you are interested in having a flu shot clinic at your business or at a particular location in the community, it's not too late to coordinate one by calling the Health Department at 697-7039. You may also drop in the department in Cameron or Rockdale to get a shot. The next planned flu clinic will be at Minerva Community Center on Nov 10 from 9:00 to 11:00 am. For those of you that are covered, Medicare will be billed direct, otherwise the cost is \$30 for a shot. The Health Dept. is not able to process private insurance, so in that case you need to go to your private provider if you want your private insurance to cover the cost. The Health Department is doing this as a public service to try to get as many people immunized in the community as possible; we are not trying to compete with private services.

If more clinics are scheduled this year, they will be advertised on the local radio and newspapers and on the Health Department Facebook page. Robert Kirkpatrick, the Health Department director, says that in order to better plan for next year's flu season, he would like to begin the planning this December. If you or your business or company are interested in having a flu shot clinic next year, go ahead and contact the Health Department beginning this year in December (that's right in late 2016 so Robert can order vaccines and begin making plans accordingly).