Objective 1: increase in seasonal vaccine use

1.2 million Kiwis protected against the flu
Voxy (New Zealand), 28 May 2013
The government has already reached its target of immunising 1.2 million New Zealanders with the flu vaccine this year, more than two months earlier than anticipated, says Associate Health Minister Jo Goodhew. This is the largest number of Kiwis ever vaccinated against the flu, including during the pandemic flu season in 2009.

Influenza-related health care utilization and productivity losses during seasons with and without a match between the seasonal and vaccine virus B lineage
From Vaccine, published online May 23 Visit link...

Burden of seasonal and pandemic influenza-associated hospitalization during and after 2009 A(H1N1)pdm09 pandemic in a rural community in India
From May 15 PLoS One Visit link...

Clinical research during a public health emergency: a systematic review of severe pandemic influenza management
From May Crit Care Med Visit link...

2009 H1N1 PANDEMIC FLU
Risk perception, preventive behaviors, and vaccination coverage in the Korean population during the 2009-2010 pandemic influenza A (H1N1): comparison between high-risk group and non-high-risk group
From May 17 PLoS One Visit link...

Influenza vaccination campaign gets underway in Laos
Asia News Network (Asia), 16 May 2013
Hundreds of expectant mothers stood in line yesterday to receive free influenza vaccinations against the H1N1, H3N2 and B/Hybei-Wujiagang/158/2009 viruses at the opening ceremony of a vaccination campaign in Vientiane, Laos.

Prevalence of flu and use of flu shots last winter fairly typical of last decade
Wed, 15 May 2013 00:00:00 GMT

GENERAL/SEASONAL FLU & VACCINES
Trends in compliance with two-dose influenza vaccine recommendations among children aged 6 months through 8 years
From Vaccine, published online May 15 Visit link...
Objective 2: increase in vaccine production capacity

Vietnam may produce H1N1 flu vaccine in late 2014
Tuoitre News (Vietnam), 18 May 2013
The Health Ministry’s Institute for Vaccines and Medical Biologicals under the Health Ministry is stepping up preparations for production of a vaccine against H1N1 flu virus in late 2014 or early 2015. With approval from the Health Ministry, the institute conducted the first trial of its vaccine, A/H1N1/09, on 48 healthy people in Ben Luc District, southern Long An province from April to November 2012 to have an assessment of the vaccine’s effects and its safeness.

Global vaccine market forecast to 2017
Wed, 15 May 2013 00:00:00 GMT

Iran's first locally-made influenza vaccine to hit market - Payvand's Home
Mon, 13 May 2013 16:34:55 GMT

Objective 3: research and development

No benefit of double dose antiviral drug for severe influenza
Science Codex (USA), 30 May 2013
This is the first study (BMJ No benefit of double dose antiviral drug for severe influenza Thursday, May 30, 2013) to examine the effectiveness of higher doses of oseltamivir in cases of hospitalized severe human influenza (seasonal, pandemic and bird flu strains). The authors say their findings have implications for global guidelines, clinical management and pandemic preparedness, including for the current H7N9 outbreak. Researchers at the South East Asian Infectious Disease Clinical Research Network investigated whether double dose oseltamivir improves outcomes compared with the standard dose in patients admitted to hospital with severe influenza. The study took place between April 2007 and February 2010 and involved 326 patients (mostly children aged under 15) with severe influenza at 13 hospitals in Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.
In an accompanying editorial, Ian Barr and Aeron Hurt from the WHO Collaborating Centre for Reference and Research on Influenza say, despite some study limitations, what is clear is that double dose oseltamivir "is unlikely to significantly improve the clinical outcomes of severe cases of seasonal influenza."

New flu strains prompt review of current research, call to redouble flu fight
Medical Xpress (UK), 30 May 2013
Despite numerous medical advances over the past century, the flu—a seasonal rite of passage for many around the world—still remains deadly and dangerous.
Researchers have published a comprehensive overview of current flu research and efforts to combat this potentially lethal disease, including global surveillance to track the flu and vaccines and antiviral drugs currently in use. They also issue a call to improve efforts to fight the flu, including improving surveillance, developing new types of vaccines and drugs, and—most importantly—improving efforts to educate the public about the flu. This review article, entitled "Adapting global influenza management strategies to address emerging viruses", is published online by the American Journal of Physiology-Lung Cellular and Molecular Physiology.

Researchers find easy development of H7N9 Tamiflu resistance
Antiviral drugs such as oseltamivir (Tamiflu) are useful for treating H7N9 influenza infections, but there are worrisome signs that resistance can easily develop when patients take the drug, which can lead to a poor prognosis, researchers from China and Hong Kong reported today. Read CIDRAP article...
29 May 2013
Australia exports bird flu test kits to Asia
Radio Australia, 27 May 2013
Australian scientists have played a crucial role in developing a diagnostic test to detect the latest deadly strain of bird flu. The H7N9 virus has killed more than 30 people in China since February, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). Scientists from Australia’s peak scientific research body, the CSIRO, have developed a blood test which can confirm the presence of the H7N9 strain in ducks or poultry.

Travel to tropical countries aids in spread of influenza
Healio (USA), Friday 24 May 2013
International travel, especially to subtropical countries, appears to contribute to the spread of influenza worldwide, researchers from the Netherlands have found. “WHO estimates that 5% to 15% of the worldwide population is affected by seasonal influenza viruses annually,” the researchers wrote in Emerging Infectious Diseases. “Outbreaks of influenza associated with travel by air, ship or train indicate that international travellers are at risk for this infection and may introduce novel strains into domestic populations.”

Concept flu vaccine may protect against many strains with a single jab
ABC (Australia), Thursday 23 May 2013
Scientists unveiled a concept vaccine against flu Wednesday they said may protect against various strains with a single jab. Tested in ferrets, considered good human models, the synthetic vaccine uses nanotechnology to attack parts of the influenza virus that different strains have in common, they wrote in the journal Nature. “It provides a basis for development of universal influenza vaccines and for more rapid generation of vaccines during new outbreaks,” study-co-author Gary Nabel of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) in Maryland told AFP.

New computer model predicts when avian strain becomes infectious
News Medical (Australia), 21 May 2013
A new computer model could help scientists predict when a particular strain of avian influenza might become infectious from bird to human, according to a report to be published in the International Journal Data Mining and Bioinformatics ("Predicting transmission of avian influenza A viruses from avian to human by using informative physicochemical properties" in Int. J. Data Mining and Bioinformatics, 2013, 7, 166-179 )

New textile able to absorb more influenza antibodies
Japan Times, 18 May 2013
Researchers have come up with new technology that lets textiles absorb more flu antibodies, a development likely to make face masks more effective in warding off the flu bug, the Textile Industry Research Institute of Gunma said. Textiles with influenza antibodies aren’t new on the market, but the technology currently in use involves dipping fibers in a liquid with antibodies. Textiles treated this way are capable of trapping only a small amount of antibodies

The Economist: Going viral, A speedy way to make a vaccine
17 May 2013
If a new and deadly strain of influenza were to arise, putting together a vaccine against it in the least possible time would be a priority. To test how quickly that could be done a group of researchers have just had a race with themselves.

Synthetic generation of influenza vaccine viruses for rapid response to pandemics
Wed, 15 May 2013 00:00:00 GMT Visit link...
H7N9 FLU
Serologic study for influenza A (H7N9) among high-risk groups in China
Letter from N Engl J Med, published online May 29  Visit link...
Infectivity, transmission, and pathology of human H7N9 influenza in ferrets and pigs
From Science, published online May 23  Visit link...
Population-level antibody estimates to novel influenza A/H7N9
From J Infect Dis, published online May 17  Visit link...
Outbreak with a novel avian influenza A(H7N9) virus in China--scenarios and triggers for assessing risks and planning responses in the European Union, May 2013
Commentary from May 16 Euro Surveill  Visit link...
Study: H7N9 shows limited aerosol transmission in ferrets
Nature: Avian flu update: lull in new H7N9 cases
15 May 2013
Study identifies influenza viruses circulating in pigs and birds that could pose a risk to humans
Medical Xpress (UK), 10 May 2013