Memorandum

To: Environmental Safety and Risk Management Committee
From: Daniel C. Silverman, MD MPA
Date: 12/14/2005

Re: Executive Summary of State of New Jersey Smallpox Vaccination Plan

The key points to consider in the State’s announced plan for Smallpox Vaccination are:

- The state plan details how vaccinations would be given to up to 15,000 hospital and public health care workers and to the public in the event of an outbreak. To implement the plan, New Jersey has requested 15,000 doses of smallpox vaccine from the federal government.

- The vaccinations will be the first phase of a voluntary immunization program outlined in New Jersey’s smallpox vaccination preparedness plan to be submitted Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

- By the end of January or early February 2003, New Jersey plans to begin vaccinating up to 15,000 public health workers and hospital staff that have volunteered to be the front line of defense in the state’s smallpox preparedness effort.

- There are side effects associated with smallpox vaccination. Most people experience mild reactions that include a sore and swollen arm, fever, body aches, and swollen glands. Others, however, experience reactions ranging from serious to life threatening. It is estimated from prior experience with the vaccine that approximately 15 individuals per million vaccinated will experience life threatening adverse effects like encephalitis and that one or two per million will die as a result of vaccination.

- Those contraindicated to be vaccinated as part of the pre-outbreak preparedness plan include individuals with the following conditions and those who live with people who have such conditions:
- Pregnant women or women with children under the age of one year
- People with eczema/atopic dermatitis or other chronic skin conditions
- People being treated for cancer
- People who have had organ transplants or are on immunosuppressive drugs
- People who have HIV or AIDS
- People whose immune systems are compromised for any reason

- The first phase of voluntary vaccination would include **Hospital Health Care Response Teams** -- physicians, nurses and other hospital staff that would care for suspected smallpox patients and ensure appropriate procedures were followed to prevent disease spread. Each of the state’s 85 acute care hospitals is being asked to identify up to 150 volunteers for those teams.

- It would also include five **Public Health Response Teams** made up of local, county and state public health workers such as physicians, epidemiologists, public health nurses, and planners. These regional teams would be involved in investigating suspected smallpox cases as well as tracking potential contacts, vaccinating hospital workers and providing supplies and logistic support if a case of smallpox were confirmed.

- **One team will be responsible for each of the five regions.** Clinics will be located in all five regions -- the northeast, northwest, central east, central west and southern regions of New Jersey -- with an additional clinic in Newark to cover Metropolitan Medical Response System Personnel. Each clinic is expected to vaccinate about 700 people a day and will, initially, operate one day a week for four weeks.