

N.B. home support workers urged to get swine flu shot

[CBC News](#) Interview October 22, 2009 in Moncton at the New Brunswick Home Support Annual General Meeting

The New Brunswick Home Support Association is encouraging its 4,500 home support agency workers to get the H1N1 vaccine shot so they can continue to serve their elderly clients if there is a swine flu outbreak.

About 50 per cent of home support workers get the seasonal flu shot each year, association president Bob Price said Thursday.

He expects the same turnout for the swine flu shot, but he's hoping more home care workers will be vaccinated because they help seniors stay in their homes and out of hospital beds.

The association met in Moncton to talk about how to protect workers and those they care for. Many workers expressed fear about what would happen to their clients if they couldn't care for them during an outbreak.

Price said many seniors are in need of more care than in the past.

"It used to be light housekeeping and meal preparation, but it's not like that anymore. Now we get people coming out of hospitals, we get people who have to have personal care and have to have help to get out of bed and those things," he said.

'Some of them would suffer'

"I mean, if we're not there to take care of them and we can't send a substitute because there's too many people out sick, they're going to end up somewhere else in the emergency room or the hospital which we already know has problems."

Mary Goguen, a home support worker in Richibucto, said that she likely will get the shot, because if she can't go to work, her three clients could be in trouble.

"Oh my God, yeah. I don't know what would happen to them. Some of them would suffer," she said.

Also, Goguen said, if she was too ill to work, then she would not be paid.

"If we don't go to work, we're not paid. We're not paid much to start with, so it doesn't help. A lot of girls will go to work whether they're sick or not. They'll try to cover it up and go to work," she said. I know we're asked to stay home, we're asked not to go, but you have to live so you have to go to work."