

Swine flu controversy keeps residents waiting

By PATRICIA HENNING

Parade Biological Laboratories in Avon Township is still producing swine flu vaccine, despite some uncertainty as to whether a national mass immunization program will take place.

A spokesman for Detroit-based Parke Davis & Co., which runs Parke Davis, said the firm is waiting while Congress considers a bill to grant vaccine suppliers immunity from lawsuits arising through mass immunization.

No decision has been made about what to do should Congress fail to pass the immunity bill, he said.

Parke Davis is the major supplier of a vaccine to a new strain of flu virus expected to surface this winter.

Last Wednesday, E. Burke Gable, chairman of the board of Warner-Lambert Co. in Morris Plains, N.J., Parke Davis' parent company, sent a telegram to President Ford, members of the cabinet and congressional health committees noting that the firm had been denied insurance on the vaccine.

The three-page telegram said, "It is recognized by medical experts that in a mass immunization program covering all segments of the population—young, old, sick and well—that different reactions may be expected. For the vast majority, it can be anticipated with certainty that complete protection with minor or no side effects will result. Others, however, may obtain

less than full protection and others may have more severe side effects."

Gable said vaccine administered in a physician's office is a controlled situation where the doctor knows the patient's health situation and can explain possible side effects.

A mass immunization program is less controlled, said Gable. "As a result, less than full protection from illness, greater side effects than anticipated or even a subsequent unrelated illness may be considered in the minds of some as a basis for a liability suit."

GABLE ADDED that such suits could require years of litigation and could potentially undermine the company's financial solvency. He requested some form of legislation for protection.

A Parke Davis official said the firm hopes Congress will take action within weeks. He said a 1974 U.S. Supreme Court decision in the *Parke Davis* case is reluctant to supply vaccine without insurance.

The decision, *Reyes vs. Wyeth*, held Wyeth liable for an adverse reaction from a polio vaccine administered in 1950 in a mass inoculation program sponsored by local government officials.

Other suppliers of the vaccine—Merck, Sharp & Dohme of Rahway, N.J., and Wyeth Laboratories of Philadelphia—said they also have not been able to get insurance for the vaccine.

Merck-North Laboratories in Cincinnati, the fourth manufacturer, said it had liability coverage on all its products, but there

is doubt whether the insurance on the vaccine will be continued.

Since March 15, 60 of 238 Parke Davis employees have worked on vaccine production. To prevent employees from contracting the disease while working with the vaccine, they have been inoculated with the first batch.

Vaccine is produced through a process called chick cell adaptation, in which fresh fertile eggs are incubated for 11 days. Then the eggs are injected with the virus and incubated for three more days. The egg white is drawn off, filtered, and passed through a series of intricate processing steps.

If Congress grants immunity from lawsuits to the drug firms, the mass inoculation program will likely start in late summer. First to receive the vaccine will be high-risk persons, those ill and over, or those suffering from chronic respiratory diseases.

High-risk persons will receive a combined dose of swine flu vaccine and the more common Victoria flu vaccine. Others will receive only swine flu vaccine.

The vaccine will be administered by injection. After immunization, some patients may feel sore at the injection site, or develop mild flu symptoms like a runny nose.

A Parke Davis official said a production error caused some initial batches of the vaccine to give immunity to a 1951 strain of swine flu as well as the 1976 strain. The result was lowered immunity to the new strain, he said. The firm has not discovered where the error occurred.

Degrees awarded to graduates

Degrees from Ferris State College in Big Rapids, Mich. were awarded during the 1975-76 school year to the following Farmington residents: Ronald D. Devroy, 2204 Warner, BS accounting, Thomas L. Griffin, 2214 Briar Hill, BS trade tech, education, Laurie A. Hoch, 3014 11 Mile, AAS commercial art, James N. Hoffman, 2000 Alyce Kay, AAS heavy equipment service, Deborah A. Korte, 2202 Schuler, AAS legal assisting with highest distinction, Martha Kubitsky, 2010 Pipers Lane Court, AAS medical records technician, Daniel C. Lahey, 2719 Independence, AA pre art, Michael W. McCluskey, 2009 Lowery, BS pharmacy, John L. Murphy, 2024 Woodbrook, BS business administration, Bruce B. Rumble, 2209 N. Markham, AAS auto service, Bradley L. Stuehl, 2210 S. Manor Dr. 404, AS pre-engineering.

These residents of Farmington Hills also received degrees: Christine M. Hanson, 2214 Johnston, BS science education, Stephen P. Herrington, 2008 Foxglove, AAS auto body with distinction, Kathy L. Uppertauer, 2214 Baintree, AAS medical assistant, Peggy C. Orchard, 2010 Valley Side Dr., AAS medical assistant, Stephen W. Schmidt, 2202 Newlewood, AAS health optics, Diane R. Threlton, 2242 Spencewood, AAS office administration with highest distinction.

Hershoren added to 'Sounds of '76'

Mark Hershoren, son of Mr. and Mrs. Gary Hershoren of 2202 Gill in Farmington, will join 19 other Oakland County high school students in touring the state with the "Sounds of '76" Bicentennial honor ensemble.

The touring musicians will perform in the upper and lower peninsulas after rehearsals at Interlochen Music Camp. Hershoren, 17, is a June 1976 graduate of Farmington High School. He has played the trombone with the Schoolcraft Jazz Ensemble and was a drum major for Farmington High. The honor ensemble is made up of 130 students who were chosen from Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association and Michigan School Vocal Association honor groups, auditions and personal interviews.

Ernest Simpson is Peace Corps bound

Ernest L. Simpson, 2001 Jefferson, Farmington, former manager of Forest City and The Limited stores, left June 19 to begin a Peace Corps training program in Zaire.

Simpson, 25, graduated from Rutgers College, New Jersey, in 1973 with a BA in economics. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Elroy Simpson of Nashville, Tenn. He will prepare for a two-year position teaching math and physics.

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