

Vaccine

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survey to ensure they can safely take the vaccine, or determine if they need immediate medical attention.

Talipsky stressed that the high school is designed as a place to administer vaccines, not treat those already stricken by illness. Sick individuals who show up at the dispensing center would be transported to the hospital.

Individuals cleared to be vaccinated would exit the auditorium up another aisle and head to the gym inside the school building, receive the dose and immediately leave the school campus. People would be allowed to pick up doses for their households.

The intention is to get medicine to all residents as quickly as possible, Talipsky said.

Carol Ryan, a retired doctor who was stationed in the gym during the run-through, pointed to the swine flu pandemic in 2009 as a reason why training for such situations is imperative.

Chuck Kesson was part of the communication team and showed a reporter how to use his yellow and black Motorola walkie-talkie. Those devices are a contingency if phone lines are disrupted, he explained.

"It's not going to sound the same" as a phone, he warned. The exercise gave



Dave Hansen | Staff photographer

Medical emergency distribution system coordinator Richard Talipsky describes the procedure for residents from parking, entering the building and checking in for treatment in the old gym Thursday at Portsmouth High School.

him the opportunity to see how well they worked in the building. Kesson, who lives in Newport, said he trains regularly with the town's Emergency Management

Agency.

"We do this for public safety," he said.

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