Boston, Mass.--Sixty first- and second-year medical students at Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM) will spend Friday afternoon learning how to give shots so they can administer free flu shots to Boston area residents 65 or older. Nurses from the University Hospital's (UH) Home Medical Service (HMS) will be instructing the students on Friday, September 29, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Heibert Lounge on the 14th floor of BUSM, 80 E. Concord Street.

During the month of October, UH's HMS and BUSM students will provide free flu shots in an effort to prevent influenza infection among Boston's elderly population. The flu can be particularly serious in the elderly; during recent flu epidemics, approximately 80 to 90 percent of unnecessary deaths occurred among people 65 or older, according to a report by the Centers for Disease Control. While age and chronic illness are risk factors for influenza infection, vaccination of high-risk groups before flu season is the single most important preventive measure.

UH's Home Medical Service has the largest program offering free flu shots to elderly residents in the Boston area. The first of 23 clinics will be held at the Franklin Square House at 1:30 p.m. on October 8.