



ESTABLISHING AN INFLUENZA VACCINATION PROGRAM FOR STAFF: BEST PRACTICES

While there is no “one size fits all” approach when it comes to improving vaccination rates, a multifaceted campaign is more successful than using just a single approach. Organizations should use a “bundled” strategic approach to promote influenza vaccination to staff, drawing from these proven strategies below.

1. GET THE MESSAGE OUT

- Share educational messages and information about when and where vaccine will be provided via email, employee newsletters, posters, and personal announcements.
- Develop a campaign with a fun theme (example: “Kiss the Flu Goodbye” using Hershey kisses).
- Deliver messages in person at staff meetings and other times/places where employees gather together.

2. OFFER FREE VACCINE IN CONVENIENT AND ACCESSIBLE WAYS

- Offer vaccine at various times and locations; ensure that staff on all shifts, including weekends, are afforded access; consider pre-announced “vaccine days” where vaccine is offered to all staff.
- Offer vaccine in common areas such as a cafeteria or building entrances.
- Ensure a quick, streamlined process for vaccinating staff; make sure all forms are ready to go and sufficient personnel are available to provide vaccinations.
- Use mobile carts to take vaccine to units or departments to vaccinate staff during their work shifts.
- Offer vaccine while meetings are taking place and during shift changes.

3. EDUCATE STAFF ABOUT THE IMPACTS OF FLU AND THE BENEFITS OF VACCINATION

- Tailor educational messages to address specific concerns of your staff.
- Do not rely solely on print materials; include personal contact as a component of educational efforts.
- Give staff opportunities to ask questions privately.
- Make sure to cover benefits of vaccination, impact and severity of the flu for staff and patients, modes of flu transmission, diagnosis and treatment, and infection control strategies.
- Focus on protecting the worker and their family as well as the residents/patients.

4. ENSURE LEADERSHIP AND PEER SUPPORT

- Ensure that policies are in place to support vaccination efforts, and to reduce cost and barriers to access.
- Establish an organizational culture in which vaccination is not only encouraged but is expected as an important component of patient safety.
- Use peer vaccinators to provide vaccine to their coworkers in their respective work areas and answer questions.
- Ensure that senior staff, organizational leaders and peer leaders are vaccinated; encourage all staff to wear stickers or other visible signs that indicate they have received their vaccine.
- Foster teambuilding to increase trust and cooperation among staff; teambuilding may lead to increased compliance with organizational goals, including immunization.

5. USE INCENTIVES AND PENALTIES TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION

- Obtain a signed declination from any staff that decline vaccination.
- Offer incentives to staff who get vaccinated such as small gifts, coupons, raffles for gift cards or other prizes.
- Include vaccine acceptance as a component of performance reviews.

6. MEASURE PROGRESS AND PROVIDE FEEDBACK TO STAFF

- Regularly track and measure staff vaccination rates and communicate progress to staff.
- Accurately track rates at the individual and unit levels; recognize units with good participation.

Adapted from: “Providing a Safer Environment for Health Care Personnel and Patients through Influenza Vaccination: Strategies from Research and Practice.” Joint Commission, 2009.