

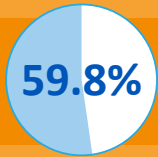


# LONG-TERM CARE STAFF IMMUNIZATION

Healthcare personnel in long-term care settings have the lowest reported influenza vaccination rates among all healthcare personnel.

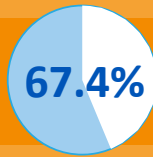
In the 2014 – 2015 flu season:

ONLY



of long-term care assistants/aides were immunized<sup>1</sup>

ONLY



of long-term care administrative support staff, food service workers, housekeeping, maintenance staff, janitors and laundry workers were immunized<sup>1</sup>

Influenza outbreaks in long-term care facilities have been attributed to low influenza vaccination coverage among healthcare personnel. Vaccination of healthcare professionals in long-term care settings is extremely important because<sup>2</sup>:

- People 65 years and older are at greater risk of serious complications from the flu
- Flu vaccine effectiveness is generally lowest in the elderly, making vaccination of close contacts critical
- Multiple studies have demonstrated health benefits to residents, including reduced flu-related complications and reduced risk of death, with vaccination of healthcare professionals

## STRATEGIES THAT WORK TO INCREASE STAFF IMMUNIZATION

Institute a policy that requires staff vaccination. These policies increase the immunization rate to more than 98% among long-term care employees<sup>1</sup>

In the event of an influenza outbreak, unvaccinated employees are required to take unpaid leave - use of sick or vacation time is not allowed<sup>2</sup>

- Require staff to sign a declination form
- Require staff declining immunization to wear a mask at all times and a button stating he/she declined vaccination<sup>2</sup>

Use incentives to increase immunization participation:<sup>2</sup>

- Enter employees who register for immunization into a drawing for an iPod or other electronic device
- Use merchandise as an incentive: winter hats, caps, bags or water bottles
- Tie flu shots into promoting overall wellness by giving away pedometers, yoga kits, workout videos or electronic scales
- Provide small gift cards (worth approximately \$20) for participation

Use blitz advertising for a vaccination campaign: flyers in mailboxes, posters by frequently traveled areas, reminders inside restrooms<sup>3</sup>

Reduce barriers to healthcare personnel being vaccinated by offering:<sup>2,3</sup>

- Easy access to vaccination locations
- Free vaccinations, in a small private room if possible, to all staff – including volunteers
- Onsite vaccinations over multiple days and shifts
- A strong staff educational program that focuses on protecting staff & their family, as well as residents
- Information to dispel myths/fears that influenza is not a serious illness/not a risk for young or healthy people, or that the influenza vaccine causes illness/side effects

### Helpful Websites

- [YouTube Video: Influenza Immunizations and the Health Care Worker: 18 minute video](#)
- [Common Misperceptions of Influenza Poster: poster highlighting misperceptions of influenza](#)

### Sources:

<sup>1</sup>CDC. "Influenza Vaccination Coverage Among Health Care Personnel." MMWR. Sept 18, 2015. 63(37); 805-811.

<sup>2</sup>CDC Toolkit for Long-Term Care Employers: campaign materials & tools to increase vaccination

<sup>3</sup>Do No Harm...Stick Out Your Arm!: Long-term Care toolkit and vaccination campaign resources

<sup>4</sup>CDC Make It Your Business to Fight the Flu: toolkit for businesses and employers

