

Stop the flu it starts with you!



BARRIERS TO INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION OF HEALTH CARE WORKERS AND STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME THEM

This list is intended for use when planning campaigns to improve health care worker influenza immunization rates.

Barrier	Strategy to Overcome Barrier
Cost	Provide immunizations free of charge or at reduced charge to HCW
Inconvenience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct immunization clinics during all shifts ○ Conduct immunization clinics during departmental staff meetings ○ Use rolling carts so that immunizations can be administered at various locations in the work place ○ Establish procedures that require HCW to submit declination forms by waiting in the same line those accepting immunization (i.e., make declination as “inconvenient” as acceptance)
Fear of needles	Use intranasal vaccine (live attenuated influenza vaccine) for HCW who meet eligibility criteria
Misperception about risk of transmission of infection from HCW to patients	Provide in-service or other targeted education about influenza outbreaks that have been traced to HCW
Misperception about risk for influenza infection in HCW	Provide in-service or other targeted education about incidence of infection in HCW and the consequences in lost work days and presenteeism (decreased productivity in workers reporting to work when sick)
Misperception about vaccine efficacy	Provide in-service or other targeted education about vaccine efficacy
Concerns about contracting influenza from vaccine	Provide in-service or other targeted education about the inability to acquire infection from the inactivated and live attenuated forms of the vaccine. As a part of this education, note that if influenza infection does occur despite vaccination, the symptoms are usually mild.
Concerns about risk of adverse effects from vaccine	Provide in-service or other targeted education about low risk of adverse effects from vaccine. Note that adverse effects are also associated with antiviral medications (e.g., oseltamivir, zanamivir, rimantadine)
Lack of motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide incentives for immunization (e.g., free or discounted meals, snacks, theater tickets) ○ Establish work place restrictions for unvaccinated HCW (e.g., restrict access of unvaccinated HCW to certain types of patients or require unvaccinated HCW who come in contact with patients to use masks)

HCW = health care worker

References

1. Hofmann F, Ferracin C, Marsh G et al. Influenza vaccination of healthcare workers: a literature review of attitudes and beliefs. *Infection*. 2006; 34:142-7.
2. Christini AB, Shutt KA, Byers KE et al. Influenza vaccination rates and motivators among healthcare worker groups. *Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol*. 2007; 28:171-7.



Developed by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists
More information is available at www.YouCanStopTheFlu.com