

Best Practices

for Increasing Influenza Vaccination Levels among Healthcare Workers

Facility: Virginia Mason Medical Center (VMMC)
1100 Ninth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

Type of Facility: Hospital, Medical Center

VMMC Reach: Main clinic and hospital in downtown Seattle; seven satellite clinics in western Washington; multi-specialty group practice (480 physicians, 5000 FTEs); over 1 million outpatient visits per year; 16,000 in-patient admissions per year; 336-bed tertiary care hospital

Methods:

- Began program planning with literature reviews and workshops to look at ways to improve delivery of influenza vaccine to patients and staff
- Developed and received approval of “fitness for duty” vaccination policy in August 2004, that
 - covers all employed staff, physicians, community providers, contingent labor, vendors, volunteers and students
 - allows for written requests for accommodations, including for religious or medical reasons, to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the medical director of Employee Health, the VMMC Infectious Disease Department, an asthma and allergy physician, and staff from Employee Health and Human Resources
 - requires that all staff who have been granted accommodations must wear a mask during the entire influenza season
- Designed and built wall-mounted and [stand-alone respiratory kiosks](#) that were placed at all entrances and on hospital units to promote and support respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene
- Created a multi-disciplinary team that met weekly to provide support and drive the campaign.
- Created community partnerships to extend the vaccination and education reach of the VMMC program; local schools, Faces of Influenza campaign, NFL Seattle Seahawks, corporate partners, homeless communities that had set up “tent cities” in community locations (e.g., church parking lots)

Incentives:

- Campaign kick-off [“tailgate” party](#) with the NFL’s Seattle Seahawks; activities included photos with players, autographs, t-shirts, buttons, bracelets
- Partnered with Tully’s Coffee to promote the “double shot” campaign
- Promoted a “Name the campaign” contest; winning slogan, “Save Lives – Immunize” was printed on [bracelets](#) and lanyards and given to staff to provide a visual cue of vaccinated employees

Prevent Influenza Now!

Sponsored by the National Influenza Vaccine Summit
www.preventinfluenza.org

Obstacles and Solutions:

Obstacle: HCWs needed easy access to vaccination services

Solution: VMMC provided mobile carts, after hours and week-end clinics, [drive-through clinics](#), extended hours in employee health

Obstacle: HCW lacked information about disease and vaccine

Solution: VMMC provided on-line educational modules, quizzes, and internal website to support staff education; staff became eligible for prizes for early participation

Obstacle: HCW had concerns about safety of vaccine (e.g., thimerosal)

Solution: VMMC provided optional single dose, T-free vaccine

Obstacle: HCW had needle phobia

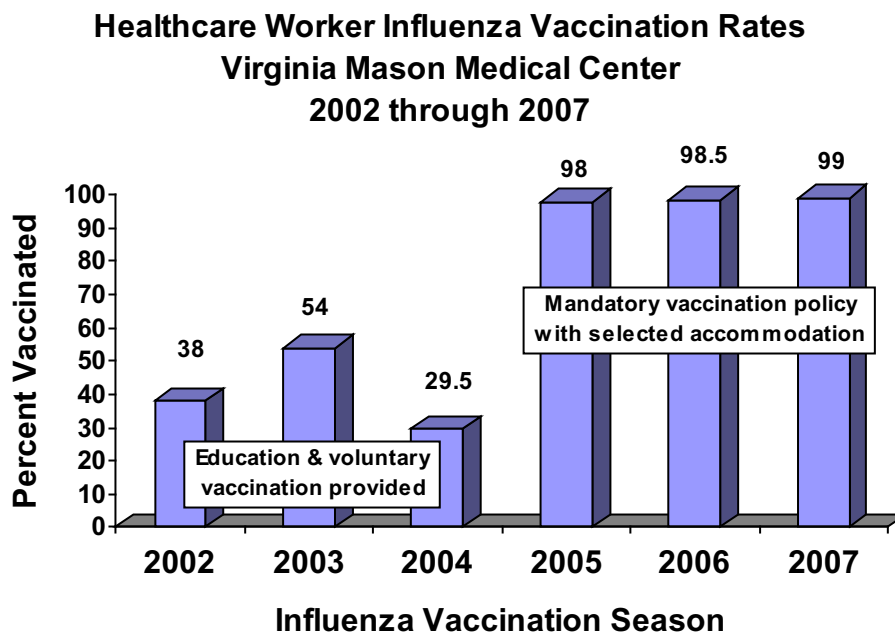
Solution: VMMC provided LAIV option

Obstacle: HCW reported allergies

Solution: VMMC provided allergy testing (A&A partners)

Results:

- Vaccination rates for HCWs at VMMC have reached 98% or higher in the three years since the mandatory policy was implemented (see chart below)



Contact:

Beverly Hagar
206-341-0575