Role of Schools & School Nurses in flu vaccine delivery

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Flu IZ through Schools

• Benefits & opportunities
• Barriers
• School Nurses
• What’s possible now
Benefits & Opportunities

- access to 97% of school-age youth
  - 11% in parochial & private schools
- age-based infrastructure
- 14 states: mandated ratio pupils/SN
- Sept. to May accessibility
- some access to parents/family

1 US Census, 2007
2 National Center for Educational Statistics 2008, actual data for 2005

Go where they are.

5-17* year olds: 53.2M
  - enrolled in school: 51.7M: 97.2%
  - (estim) 26M: elementary (K-5/6)
  - (estim) 26M: middle/high
  - parochial & private: 6.1 M: 11%

1 US Census 2007 Enrollment Status, 2007
2 Nat’l Center for Education Statistics, 2008
Flu Shots are easier....

- one dose for most students
- nasal spray easier than injections
- public perception of high risks of flu
- public familiarity with flu vaccine

BUT...there are barriers

- decentralized authority
- NCLB: focus on testing
- 36 states: no pupil/SN mandates
- little to no funding for prevention
- under-served areas--few partnership op’s


...and more barriers.

- parent consent: paper intensive
- no mechanism for billing
- registry not always available or accessible
- school staff resistance
- cultural and language barriers

School Nurse’s dream...
Dream about...

“....and obesity and asthma and bullying and family crises and child abuse and...”

Typical day in a high school

- Acute care: parent, MD, teacher
- Counseling re: possible pregnancy
- Teacher consultation
- Meeting: SAP, SST, IEP, 504...
- Health education class
- Condom teaching session
- Supervision: nursing/medical students
Dimensions of Role

- Direct services
- Screen/referral
- Health education
- Advocacy/policy
- Coordination


8 Component Model

Family/Community Involvement
Health Education
Physical Education
Health Promotion for Staff
Health Services
Healthy School Environment
Nutrition Services
Counseling, Psychological & Social Services
Role in IZ Services

- Direct services
  - Assess eligibility for vaccines
  - Administer vaccines
- Coordination
  - Health Dept, Registry, et Al.
- Health education
  - Students, Families, Staff
- Collaboration
  - Medical assoc, IZ Coalition, PTSAs, hospitals, HMOs

What would help?

- Sustained, stable funding
- Flu vaccine linked with “back to school”
- School nurse ratio 1:750
- Paper-less consent process
- Registry
- Mandate

Lindley, MC et Al. The role of schools in strengthening delivery of new adolescent vaccinations, Pediatrics, 2008;121;S46-S54.
What’s possible now?

Education of:
- school staff
- teachers
- parents/families

Promotion methods:
- school bulletins, newsletters
- email blasts, auto-dialed messages
- publicizing science-based/"cool" websites
- peer-to-peer programs


References

- Taliaferro V. Where, oh where, are the school nurses? Staffing in school health services programs, NASN Newsletter, July 2005.
- US Census. Table 1: Enrollment status of population 3 years old and over..., Oct. 2007.