

# National Adult Immunization SUMMIT

## Adult Vaccination: What Works

### Name of the Organization

#### **American Pharmacists Association-Immunization Awards Program:**

Recognizing the Power of the Immunization Champion

### What We Did and When:

The **American Pharmacists Association** makes numerous contributions to increasing immunization rates and one way is through its Immunization Champion Award Program. These special awards were created in 2008 to recognize the value and extraordinary contributions pharmacists provide to improving the vaccination rates in their communities. Pharmacists, in collaboration with physicians, public health officials, and other immunization stakeholders, are increasing public access to vaccines across the life span. Solicitations for nominations are broadly solicited inside and outside of the profession. Over 100 applications have been received each year and the recipients are selected by an awards selection committee. While the national and honorable mention winners are highlighted in the program booklet at the presentation ceremony, on the Web, and through other vehicles, all of the nominations are screened for best practice examples to be highlighted each year.

In 2013, there are six categories of recognition, including individual practitioners, corporations/institution, partnerships with other health care providers and public health, community outreach, a special friend of pharmacy's immunization efforts, and a pharmacy team member. The 2013 awards are scheduled to be presented at the APhA Annual Meeting, March 1-4, 2013, Los Angeles, California.

APhA's program highlights a common theme in the immunization world: The power of one or more dedicated immunization champions and how they can really make all the difference.

### Outcome or Results We Got:

To learn about the 2012 recipients go to:

[http://www.pharmacist.com/sites/default/files/ImmunChampAwards\\_2012.pdf#overlay-context=immunization-champion-awards-2012](http://www.pharmacist.com/sites/default/files/ImmunChampAwards_2012.pdf#overlay-context=immunization-champion-awards-2012)

In addition to the 2012 award winners, here are some examples of other pharmacy-led efforts to increase adult vaccination rates:

- The pharmacist asks every single patient about getting a flu shot and explains the benefits of getting immunized.
- The pharmacist launched a flu shot contest at his store to increase awareness among his customers and improve immunization rates.
- The pharmacist partnered with the in-store medical clinic to immunize people in the age groups that were not approved by state regulations for immunization by a pharmacist.
- The pharmacist established cross communication with front store associates to increase awareness among front store employees and customers regarding the availability of pharmacy-based immunizations.
- The pharmacist and his staff tagged all bags and made a point to counsel every single customer about why to immunize and how much it would cost with their insurance.
- The pharmacist called all customers who received a Tamiflu (oseltamivir) prescription during the prior year and informed them that they can prevent the flu this year by getting a timely flu shot. The program had a 75% success rate as most who had encountered the flu chose to receive a flu shot this year.
- A new pharmacy school graduate created a poster board display to attract patients and have them recognize that the pharmacy offered several important vaccines.
- The pharmacist typically volunteers her time, one to two times per month, to provide vaccinations in the community. These events span the spectrum from back-to-school clinics and influenza clinics to World Refugee Day as well as asthma clinics.
- Under a collaborative practice agreement with physicians, the pharmacist ensured that the pharmacy offered vaccines to

every patient who came to the pharmacy. This lessened the burden on medical and nursing staff.

The pharmacist also strove to decrease the patient waiting time for an influenza or pneumococcal vaccine. The Immunization Clinic has proved to be efficient, cutting down the patient waiting time from 60 to under 15 minutes.

- This pharmacist elected to provide immunization services during his personal time to area nursing homes. There were many in this community who truly appreciated his efforts.
- With pharmacist leadership, the Adult Immunization Coalition wrote letters to regional insurance plans petitioning for fair pharmacy reimbursement that would include administration fees similar to traditional medical sites. This started dialogue with insurance plans that were previously unwilling to consider pharmacy-based immunizations. Recently, one of the state's largest plans opened its pharmacy benefits to include many non-flu vaccines and reimburse for vaccine administration fees.
- In August 2009, the hospital expanded clinical pharmacy services to include an outpatient hemodialysis clinic. One of the first tasks was a continuous quality improvement (CQI) project to increase vaccination documentation and rates within the clinic. Prior to this project, the vaccination rate for influenza in 2009 was reported to be approximately 60%; however, the documentation for influenza vaccination remained lower. After identifying the need, a plan for an influenza clinic was put into place in which, the pharmacist worked with the physicians, nurse practitioners, nurse manager, and individual nurses to ensure that all patients had the proper information to make an informed decision. In both 2010 and 2011, the vaccination rate in the dialysis clinic was greater than 90%. This plan proved not only to be easy to plan and execute with the pharmacist's help, but also has showed sustained results over a two-year period and exceeds the Healthy People target goals. In addition to targeting influenza and pneumococcal vaccine rates, documentation more than doubled with pharmacist involvement in the CQI project; time to addressing hepatitis antibody titers and hepatitis vaccination records improved; and Tdap vaccinations were offered and executed with limited patient refusal.

**About this Organization:**

Founded in 1852, **APhA** is the largest association of pharmacists in the United States, with more than 62,000 practicing pharmacists, pharmaceutical scientists, student pharmacists, and pharmacy technicians as members. In recent years, pharmacists have developed numerous policies, procedures, innovations, and education efforts that have significantly increased adult immunization rates, especially influenza vaccination rates.

**Resources or References Cited:**

[http://www.pharmacist.com/sites/default/files/ImmunChampAwards\\_2012.pdf#overlay-context=immunization-champion-awards-2012](http://www.pharmacist.com/sites/default/files/ImmunChampAwards_2012.pdf#overlay-context=immunization-champion-awards-2012)