Seasonal Influenza Communication Challenges and Strategies

Preparing for 2019-2020

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National Adult and Influenza Immunization Summit
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Flu Seasons Are Unique and Unpredictable

2017-2018

_The New York Times_

*Over 80,000 Americans Died of Flu Last Winter, Highest Toll in Years*

Among the dead were 180 babies, children and teenagers, more than in any year since the C.D.C. began tracking pediatric deaths.

2018-2019

This flu season is the longest in a decade, CDC says
Flu Communication Landscape is Complex

Summit Partners and Others

CDC’s External Flu Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Science, Surveillance &amp; Program</th>
<th>Scientific &amp; Technical Communication</th>
<th>Media, Partner &amp; Provider Communication</th>
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<td>MMWRs</td>
<td>Technical Key Points</td>
<td>Kick off Press Conference</td>
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<td>FluView</td>
<td>Vaccine Provider Training (ie: storage and handling)</td>
<td>Fight Flu Resources</td>
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<td>ACIP Policy Notes</td>
<td>Clinician training and continuing education</td>
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<td>Flu vaccine supply</td>
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<td>FluVaxView</td>
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Flu Communication Challenges

- Flu is chronically underrated and viewed as commonplace
  - Belief that it is mild, unlikely to get sick
- Flu vaccine is also misunderstood
  - VE can be confusing and discouraging
  - Flu vaccine myths and misperceptions informed by personal experience – can be hard to correct
- Flu burden and VE can increase media coverage – but may have positive or negative effects on flu vaccine coverage
### CDC’s Flu Communication Objectives

- **Healthcare providers (HCPs)**
  - Increase the number of HCPs making a strong flu vaccine recommendation and support those HCPs already making flu vaccine recommendations to patients across the lifespan.

- **Consumers**
  - Improve consumer understanding of the burden and severity of flu and motivate them to get vaccinated against flu and take other actions to protect themselves and loved ones.

- **Partners**
  - Provide clear, consistent, and timely scientific, technical and programmatic information and communication resources to partners in support of their flu prevention and control activities.

### Focus on Flu Burden and Severity...

CDC estimates that, from October 1, 2018, through May 4, 2019, there have been:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Flu Illnesses</th>
<th>Medical Visits</th>
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<td>37.4 million – 42.9 million</td>
<td>17.3 million – 20.1 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flu Hospitalizations</td>
<td>Flu Deaths</td>
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<td>531,000 – 647,000</td>
<td>36,400 – 61,200</td>
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And on Flu Vaccine Benefits

Flu vaccines save lives in children.

Flu vaccines protect you and your baby.

Flu vaccines are an important part of managing your chronic disease.

Flu vaccines are part of your healthy lifestyle.

[Image: https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/vaccine-benefits.htm]

2019-2020 Flu Season

External Communication Activities

- NFID Seasonal Flu Vaccination Campaign Kick-off: September 26
- Focus on reaching healthcare professionals
  - Fight Flu materials will be updated and online
  - Website will include updated recommendations
  - Add to “How I Recommend” video library
  - Maintain and extend adult vax partnerships
- Continue media relations strategies and response to clinician and consumer inquiries
- Include stories

Current Communication Research

- Testing communication tools to support provider/patient conversations
- Survey of adults with chronic health conditions
- Maternal clinician encounter observations during upcoming flu season
Thank you!

For more information, contact CDC
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)

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