Communication Challenges, Opportunities & Strategies in Pharmacies – The Flu Season Experience

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Focus of Discussion

1) Discuss current and future needs regarding messaging by pharmacists and the immunization neighborhood regarding influenza vaccination.
2) Discuss the importance of unity and consistency in communications within the immunization neighborhood.
Vision for Immunizing Pharmacists

Pharmacists are an accessible, valued and recognized member of the immunization neighborhood who is authorized and compensated for providing immunization service related to ACIP recommended vaccinations that improve public health.

Immunization Neighborhood

Collaboration, Coordination, and Communication among immunization stakeholders dedicated to meeting the immunization needs of the patient and protecting the community from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Coined by APhA in 2012

NVAC Adult Immunization Practice Standards

Calls to action for healthcare professionals
- **Assess** immunization status of all patients in every clinical encounter.
- Strongly **Recommend** vaccines that patients need.
- **Administer** needed vaccines or **Refer** to a provider who can immunize.
- **Document** vaccines received by patients, including entering immunizations into immunization registries.
Community vaccination programs should balance maximizing likelihood of persistence of vaccine-induced protection through the season with avoiding missed opportunities to vaccinate or vaccinating after onset of influenza circulation occurs.

Although delaying vaccination might result in greater immunity later in the season, deferral also might result in missed opportunities to vaccinate, as well as difficulties in vaccinating a population within a more constrained time period. Efforts should be structured to optimize vaccination coverage before influenza activity in the community begins.

Variable data contained in the table following this paragraph.

New Best-seller Series - Time to tell the story

• Patient stories
• Burden of season
  • Workforce impact
  • Hospitalizations
  • Deaths
• Risk to Community
  • Message opportunity
• Walk-the-talk

How do we communicate Vaccine Efficacy and Real-World Experience to overcome vaccine hesitancy?

• Many factors impact VE / Real World Experience
  • Double-edged sword: Percentages vs observational impact
  • VE numbers could be better and we can’t sit back because
    • as VE improves, burden of disease reduces, and importance of vaccination may be impacted
• Vaccine effectiveness 29% in acute MI prevention
  • “On par or better than accepted preventive measures [as] statins (36%), anti-hypertensives (15–18%), and smoking cessation (26%)”

Understanding how to communicate

Pharmacists are no different than any other providers

- Challenged with understanding the data and how to communicate it effectively to the public
  - Consistent messaging across the immunization neighborhood is a necessity
  - Put a face on the story for why people should get immunized (Reduces symptoms and illness length – Key messages)
  - Education, repeat of messages, life experiences all influence health care providers

Pharmacists and Documentation / IIS

- All individuals who administer a vaccine should input data into the IIS, so that a full record is available for reference and unnecessary vaccine administration is avoided.
- As part of Pharmacists’ Patient Care Process: proactively assess a patient’s immunization history at any patient visit, and where available, assess data within IIS. Requirements for reporting of vaccination data should be consistently applied across all immunization providers.
- Pharmacists should continue educating patients about the importance of tracking their vaccine history and how their information may be stored electronically for other vaccine providers to access through an IIS.

Source: Pharmacists: Advancing Core Elements of the Immunization Neighborhood and the Adult Immunization Standards
funded by the CDC Cooperative Agreement number H23IP000984, 2015-2017 report produced September 2017
Increase public understanding
Communication / Documentation engagement of providers and patients

Update
Report
Carry
Share

Communication is a two-way street.