2020-2021 Flu Vaccine Communications

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May 21, 2020

Communications Environment

- CDC works each year to increase influenza vaccine uptake and eliminate barriers to vaccination.
- 2020-2021 provides a unique environment for influenza (flu) vaccine both in terms of administration and communications.
- During 2020-2021, CDC will enhance communications efforts to promote flu vaccine uptake.
- CDC will communicate that getting a flu vaccine is part of a comprehensive public health strategy to reduce the burden of flu and respiratory illnesses overall, and also to preserve scarce health care resources for care of patients with COVID-19.
- All needs to be carefully coordinated with COVID-19 Response.

Communications Goal & Special Target Audiences

- **GOAL:** Increase flu vaccine uptake, especially in people at higher risk of serious flu and COVID-19 outcomes.
- **SPECIAL TARGET AUDIENCES:**
  - Older Americans
  - People of any age with underlying health conditions (for example lung disease, heart disease, neurologic disorders, weakened immune systems, diabetes)
  - Workers in LTC facilities
  - Other Essential Workers
  - African Americans and Hispanics

US Flu Vaccine Campaign: A Multi-Step Process

- Development of Key Messages
- Development of Persuasive Creative & Content Concepts (Porter Novelli)
- Testing (What messages & visuals are most motivating?)
- Refinement
- Roll-Out & Implementation
  - Campaign Launch
  - Messages & Materials for different audiences, including general public, target audiences, HCWs, other partners, media,
  - Media Strategy (including some paid media)
  - Social Media Strategy
  - Leveraging Partnerships

KEY MESSAGES *DRAFT*

- While what will happen this fall and winter is uncertain, in the context of likely ongoing COVID-19 activity along with seasonal flu activity, getting a flu vaccine will be more important than ever.
- Flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19.
- A flu vaccine will help protect you against flu.
- In addition, getting a flu vaccine this fall will:
  - Reduce the risk of ending up in a possibly crowded medical setting
  - Help conserve scarce medical resources to care for COVID-19 patients
  - Help protect frontline health care workers

KEY MESSAGES *DRAFT*

- Ongoing COVID-19 activity may impact when, where and how flu vaccines are given.
  - People may need to get vaccinated at a different place or in a different way (i.e., socially distanced vaccination).
  - CDC is working with manufacturers to maximize flu vaccine availability and with providers to develop contingency plans so that people can be vaccinated in a safe environment.
- Also to include messaging on flu vaccine benefits, flu vaccine safety, everyday preventive actions and special recommended actions because of COVID-19 and promotion of www.vaccinefinder.gov.
WHEN TO GET VACCINATED

- Before flu activity begins in your community.
- July and August are probably too early to get vaccinated, especially for older people.
- September and October are good times to be vaccinated.
  - Consider taking advantage of any lull in COVID-19 activity during September and October to get vaccinated.
- Continue vaccinating into December or later, even if influenza activity has already begun. It is still beneficial during the majority of influenza seasons.

BEING TESTED

CONCEPTUALLY WHAT IS MOST MOTIVATING

- Protect self & loved ones
- Protect community (local)
- Protect community (collective, “alonetogether” etc...)

OTHER TESTING

- How does COVID-19 impact intent to vaccinate?
- “Flatten the curve”
- Scarce medical resources
- Get vaccinated in a “safe environment”

NFID Annual Influenza/Pneumococcal News Conference

- Milestone NFID/CDC media event
- October 1, 2020:

Thank you!

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

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.