



National Influenza Vaccine Summit

Influenza Activity Spotlights

Monday, February 6, 2012

Issue #13

Professional Medical Organizations
Please disseminate widely to all of your members.

1. Summary of the February 2, 2012 National Influenza Vaccine Summit Call

Dr. L.J Tan welcomed Summit partners to the call. He also reminded participants that the National Influenza Vaccine Summit News *eUpdate* will now be distributed on Mondays instead of Fridays, in order to accommodate the Friday release of the latest CDC *FluViews*.

Influenza Surveillance Update - Scott Epperson from CDC provided an update on the current influenza season. The season continues to be relatively quiet, but there are some indications that disease activity may be picking up. Although the trend remains below baseline, laboratory and outpatient surveillance networks have shown some recent uptick in activity, primarily in the western, southwestern, and upper midwestern parts of the country. Seasonal H3N2 virus is the most commonly reported strain, with some reports of 2009 H1N1 influenza as well. The vaccine type A strains look similar to the virus strains circulating in the northern hemisphere. Scott noted there has been a great deal of media attention on recent influenza activity in Mexico. At this point, CDC does not feel that there is anything different about these cases in either severity of disease or timing; rather, it seems like the normal start of the influenza season for Mexico. One point of interest is that Mexico is primarily seeing cases involving 2009 H1N1 influenza virus. A [story](#) about Mexico's experience to date is available at VaccineDailyNews.com.

In response to a question about the predominant influenza strain in the southern hemisphere last season, Scott noted that WHO had provided a comprehensive [summary](#) of the 2011 southern hemisphere influenza season. In general, it was a mixed season, with different regions experiencing different strains.

Scott also noted that two lines of B strains (Victoria and Yamagata) were currently circulating in the United States, with each line resulting in approximately 50% of cases. If this pattern persists, we could have another season where half the circulating B viruses will not match the vaccine virus. In general, however, fewer B viruses than A are circulating.

Call participants asked if we know the percentage of people vaccinated against influenza this season and if a high rate of vaccination could be contributing to low rates of influenza disease. Dr. Carolyn Bridges from CDC said that a November 2011 survey indicates the percentage of people getting vaccinated this season is approximately 40%, which is on par with last year. There have been 138 million doses of vaccine distributed, which is less than last year, but probably about the same number of doses have been administered. It is more likely that the relatively low rate of disease is due to

normal influenza season variability with timing and strain type, rather than any major difference in vaccination rates.

Dr. Bridges also noted that CDC uses surveillance data of actual doses given, not just distributed, in the current season to estimate future influenza vaccine demand. It is important to recognize that CDC is not the major purchaser of influenza vaccine. The free market, with significant private sector purchases, is responsible for the bulk of influenza vaccine purchase in the United States. Dr. Tan pointed out that it is important to ensure a sufficient vaccine supply is available as we continue our efforts to increase demand.

2012 NIVS Immunization Excellence Awards Nominations - Dr. Tan presented information from Mitch Rothholz, American Pharmacists Association, who was unable to attend today's call.

The National Influenza Vaccine Summit is soliciting nominations for the 2012 *NIVS Immunization Excellence Awards*. Nominations close on March 2. These awards recognize individuals and organizations that have made extraordinary contributions towards improved adult and/or childhood influenza vaccination rates within their communities during the 2011-2012 influenza season. A national winner and honorable mention recipient will be selected for each of the four award categories listed below. Winners will be presented their awards at the National Influenza Vaccine Summit in Atlanta on May 15–17 and will be invited to deliver a presentation to Summit attendees.

The *Immunization Excellence Awards* provide recognition in four categories:

- **Overall Season Activities** (activities related to early season and later season);
- **Healthcare Personnel Campaign** (community and/or institutional-based activities);
- **Immunization Coalitions/Public Health Community Campaign** (programs conducted within states and communities that demonstrate strong public and private collaboration); and
- **Corporate Campaign** (programs developed by communication/public relations organizations and/or supported by manufacturers, distributors or other for profit entities, such as multi-practice site companies.)

Click [here](#) to access complete information about the Awards and the online nomination form.

2. **The CDC/Influenza Division Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report** ending week 4, 2012 (ending January 28, 2012) is available [here](#). This site includes maps of the ILINet Activity Level and the [geographic spread](#) of influenza illness as reported by state and territorial epidemiologists. CDC's seasonal influenza key points from February 3 are available [here](#). [Archives](#) of previous *FluViews* are available.

3. **New CDC Video Influenza Resources Available!**

Several new streaming video resources are available under "Video/Audio Tools" section of CDC's *Free Influenza Resources* [website](#). These include:

CDC Expert Video Commentary on Medscape

[It's Not Too Late to Vaccinate \(patients with cardiac disease\)](#) - Dr. Joseph Bresee

New Streaming Videos

Answers to Common Questions about the Flu Vaccine - Dr. Tim Uyeki
Addresses general questions about influenza vaccine

Flu Vaccine Information for Pregnant Women and Children - Dr. Alicia Fry
Addresses questions about influenza vaccine for pregnant women and children

4. Call for Nominations – 2012 NIVS Immunization Excellence Awards (Deadline March 2, 2012)

As noted in #1 (Summary of the February 2, 2012 National Influenza Vaccine Summit Call) and repeated below, nominations are being accepted through March 2 for the 2012 *NIVS Immunization Excellence Awards*. **Summit partners are asked to disseminate the following information as widely as possible.**

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5. National Business Group on Health says Health Care Facilities Should Require Flu Vaccinations for All of Their Employees

On February 2 the National Business Group on Health (NBGH) issued a strong [policy statement](#) recommending that U.S. hospitals and health care facilities require all of their employees be vaccinated annually for influenza. As noted in an accompanying [press release](#), the NBGH, which represents more than 340 members, mostly large U.S. employers, including 68 of the *Fortune 100*, says requiring annual seasonal influenza vaccination will reduce the risk that hospital and health care employees who have not received vaccinations pose to patients, other employees and their families.

6. Study finds influenza B may be more severe than thought

As reported by [CIDRAP](#), an autopsy study involving influenza B infections revealed how histologically similar the disease is to fatal influenza A and how quickly it can kill, challenging the notion that it is milder than influenza A. Click [here](#) to read the abstract of the primary research article and [here](#) to review a related editorial in the *Journal of Infectious Diseases*.

7. Influenza vaccination of healthcare workers in acute-care hospitals: a case-control study of its effect on hospital-acquired influenza among patients

A [study](#) recently published in *BMC Infectious Diseases*, an open access, peer-reviewed journal, indicates a shielding effect when more than 35% of healthcare workers in a unit are vaccinated against influenza, reducing the incidence of hospital-acquired influenza among patients in acute care units. A provisional PDF is available [here](#).

8. Peptides that could lead to universal vaccine for influenza identified

In a recent *Nature Medicine* [article](#), researchers reported the discovery of a series of peptides, found on the internal structures of influenza viruses, that could lead to the development of a universal vaccine for influenza, providing immunity against all strains of the disease, including seasonal, avian, and swine flu. An additional story on this subject is available [here](#).

9. Summit Influenza Pocket Information Guide still available!

Every year the Summit collaborates with the Immunization Action Coalition to create and distribute the Influenza Pocket Information Guide. The 2011-2012 edition is still available for [order](#).

10. Summit Web site Offers Wonderful Resources on Influenza Vaccination!

Remember to visit the Summit [website](#) for the latest on influenza immunization resources, as well as archival copies of the weekly newsletters!