



Implementation Guide: Flu Vaccination

Why is this topic important?

- Flu vaccination was selected as the first priority of the Cumberland County District Public Health Improvement Plan.
- In 2010, only about 53% of Cumberland County adults got a flu vaccine, although vaccination is now recommended for all people over 6 months of age.
- Confusion exists about current recommendations and availability of flu vaccine for people who may not have access through a doctor's office or worksite clinic.
- Adults 50-64 years old are a special target audience because they have a much lower vaccination rate than adults age 65+, yet they have high rates of chronic conditions that put them at risk for flu complications.
- Public walk-in clinics across Cumberland County provide a key access route for vulnerable populations and ensure basic readiness of our public health system to vaccinate large numbers of people as may be needed during a pandemic or other emergency situation.
- It is critical that our public flu clinics serve enough people (both insured/paying and those who cannot pay) to justify them as an efficient and effective element of our flu vaccination infrastructure. Revenue from these non-profit clinics often fails to cover their costs, leaving few resources for promotion and thus limiting public awareness of existing public clinics.

Goals of this Coordinated Communications Strategy

1. **Increase the flu vaccination rate for adults age 18+ from 53% to 60% (a net increase of 16,000 adults), while ensuring access for vulnerable populations**
2. **Encourage Cumberland County residents, particularly those in the priority target population (age 50-64), to get a flu shot**
3. **Make sure that people know that they can call 2-1-1 (or go to www.211maine.org) to find a public flu clinic near them**

Materials included in this Coordinated Communications Strategy

1. **Poster** – “Got your flu shot yet?”
2. **Newspaper ad** adapted from the poster
(email Becca.matusovich@maine.gov if interested)
3. Template **flu article** for use in newsletters – may be shortened/customized to fit the particular publication or audience
4. Monthly **clinic calendars** listing flu clinic schedules by geographic section of the county (using HMP service areas), as well as other “cuts,” i.e. clinics accessible by public transportation.

Note: Updated calendars will be emailed out on regular basis and/or can be requested from Becca.matusovich@maine.gov

Role of district partners in this communications strategy

- **Post:** The poster and relevant clinic calendar in public areas where people served by your organization will see it.
- **Share:** The poster and clinic calendars with other organizations you partner with who might be able to display them in high-traffic areas.
- **Use** the newsletter article in your organization's internal and external newsletters. Pass it on to others who have appropriate newsletters.
- **Place** the newspaper ad in local papers; forward it to other partners who might be willing to do the same.

Other ways you can help with CDPHC Flu Vaccination initiatives:

- **Serve as a partner on a public flu clinic** – get actively involved or share this information with interested organizations to facilitate a local walk-in clinic as a community host site, business partner, or community sponsor (see Community Partner Guide for details on these roles).

Supporting tool: **Community Partner Guide: [How to Support a local Flu Clinic](#)** (PDF)

- **Request/support school flu clinics-** Use your local connections with schools to talk to parents, school board members, administrators and school nurses to encourage/support school flu clinics

Supporting tool: **CDPHC Issue Brief: [School Flu Clinics](#)** (PDF)

- **Encourage employers to do workplace clinics-**Use your connections with employers, chambers of commerce, employer wellness coalitions, & civic groups to hold a clinic(note that small employers who lack the size to justify a workplace clinic can still serve their employees as business partners for public clinics - see above)

Supporting tool: [Employer Toolkit for Flu Clinics](#)

Download PDF from: www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/olph/lphd/district2/updates.shtml

- **Corporate sponsorships-** Provide or help recruit sponsors for this communications strategy (graphic design, printing, ad placement)

Supporting tool: [CDPHC Corporate Sponsorship Policy](#) (approved at the 3/18/11 CDPHC meeting, can be emailed upon request)

*We appreciate the contributions by all members of the **CDPHC Flu Workgroup and Communications Workgroup** to this collaborative effort!*

*Special thanks to **Bridgton Hospital** for their leadership on creating the poster, as well as **MaineHealth Learning Resource Center** for help with focus group testing, and **Maine CDC's Infectious Disease Epidemiology program** for contributing the graphic design work.*