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Influenza Awareness in Berlin and Montpelier, VT

Nathan L. Centybear

University of Vermont

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Influenza Awareness in Berlin and Montpelier, VT

Nathan Centybear
Site: Berlin Family Practice
Problem Identification

• The CDC estimates that influenza has caused between 9.2 million and 35.6 million illnesses, between 140,000 and 710,000 hospitalizations, and between 12,000 and 56,000 deaths annually since 2010.

• Only 44% of adults in Vermont reported getting an annual flu shot in 2013, 2014, and 2015. The percentage of adults age 60 and over dropped from 65% in 2013 to 61% in 2015
Public Health Cost

• Based on information from 2003, it was estimated that annual influenza epidemics result in 610,660 life years lost, 3.1 million hospitalized days, and 31.4 million outpatient visits in the US. Direct medical costs were estimated at $10.4 billion, and $16.3 billion due to lost earnings. The total estimated economic burden of influenza was $87.1 billion annually.

• In 2014, Flu and Pneumonia together were the 9th leading cause of death in Vermont.
Mary Helen Bayerle, RN of Berlin family practice and Thomas Kaufmann PharmD, RPh of Montpelier Pharmacy were interviewed. They identified common questions and concerns encountered in the community, such as types of vaccines available and which is most appropriate, effectiveness of the different vaccines, which vaccines are covered by insurance, time before immunity after receiving the flu vaccine, if the vaccine reduces severity if infected with the flu virus, if the vaccine can cause the flu, when to get the vaccine, and other issues.
Intervention and Methodology

• A flyer was designed to address 6 common questions and areas of concern regarding the flu vaccine that were identified in clinic and by community members.

• Information in the flyer was based off of facts and recommendations by the CDC website.

• The flyer was made available to patients in the waiting area at the Berlin family practice.
Response

The flyer was evaluated by providers and staff who felt the information was:

- presented in an appealing way
- was relevant information helpful to patients

Several patients who were asked to evaluate the content of the flyer said they learned something new from the information in the flyer.
Evaluation of effectiveness and limitations

- Having printed information to take home can be helpful if patients need to reference it later.
- The Quiz format may be more enticing than a standard flyer.
- The effectiveness of the flyer could be evaluated by surveying patients on what they learned from the flyer and if they found it helpful or not.
- The size of the flyer limited the number of questions and concerns that could be addressed.
- The availability of the flyer is limited to patients visiting the Berlin family practice.
- It is difficult to accurately assess which concerns or questions were most important to address in the flyer without doing a prior survey.
- It is uncertain whether the flyer will have an impact on vaccination rates.
Future interventions

- A survey could be made available to patients to gauge their understanding of influenza and the vaccine, and allow for patients to pose what information would be most helpful to them. This would allow for better targeted information to be included in future awareness efforts.
References


Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. This project is a requirement for the Family Medicine clerkship. It will be stored on the Dana Library ScholarWorks website. Your name will be attached to your interview and you may be cited directly or indirectly in subsequent unpublished or published work. The interviewer affirms that he/she has explained the nature and purpose of this project. The interviewee affirms that he/she has consented to this interview. Yes __X__ / No _____

Names:  Mary Helen Bayerle, RN
         Thomas Kaufmann PharmD, RPh