Vote & Vax and Community Pharmacies

Promoting Election Day Flu Clinics

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Presentation Overview

• Background and History of Walgreens as Immunization Provider

• Background and History of Vote & Vax Program

• Results of the 2012 Walgreens/Vote & Vax Collaboration
Background and History of Walgreens as Immunization Provider
The broad incidence of flu

- Every year 31.4 million outpatient visits are due to seasonal influenza\(^1\)
- More than 60% of Americans fail to get an annual flu shot\(^2\)

The related high cost

- Americans missed 230 million work days and lost $8.5 billion in wages in 2012-13\(^3\)
- Lost workdays cost employers $30 billion annually\(^3\)
- Average outpatient costs for flu\(^4\)
  - $130, not-at-risk adults (age 18-49)
  - $765, at-risk adults (50-64)
- Costs for hospitalization run into tens of thousands of dollars per admitted patient\(^4\)

Pharmacists as Immunizers Timeline

- **2006**: 37 states allow flu shots
  - 8,000 pharmacists

- **2007**: 49 states allow flu shots
  - 11,000 pharmacists

- **2008**: 45 states allow pneumonia & herpes zoster shots
  - 24,000 pharmacists

- **2009**: All states allow flu shots
  - 45 states allow pneumonia & herpes zoster shots
  - 24,000 pharmacists

- **2010**: All states allow flu shots
  - 47 states allow pneumonia & herpes zoster shots
  - 40 states allow Tdap shots
  - 25,000 pharmacists

- **2011**: ZOSTER VACCINE SUPPLY AVAILABLE
  - All states allow flu, pneumonia, & herpes zoster shots
  - 43 states allow Tdap and other vaccines
  - Over 26,000 pharmacists
  - Over 8,000 participating stores

- **2012**: PERTUSSIS OUTBREAK
  - All states allow flu shots
  - 47 states allow pneumonia & herpes zoster shots
  - 40 states allow Tdap shots
  - 25,000 pharmacists

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Pharmacies Offer Immunization Services that are Accessible and Convenient

- A study conducted in rural West Virginia suggested that convenience was the primary determining factor in mothers' decisions to take their children to pharmacies for their vaccinations\(^1\)
- A survey conducted in the UK found that the most frequent reason for choosing to be vaccinated in the pharmacy was convenient location (54.3%), followed by not needing an appointment (51.2%)\(^2\)
- A US survey found that only 20-30% of internists and family physicians stocked all CDC-recommended vaccines, with nearly 80% not planning to increase their offerings and 2% planning to stop carrying them altogether\(^3\)

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\(^2\) Evans A, Hinchliffe A, Jenkins N. Can providing NHS flu vaccination in community pharmacies reach people who otherwise would not get vaccinated? Experiences from the national community pharmacy seasonal influenza service in Wales *International Journal of Pharmacy Practice* 2013; 21 (S2): 120-1

Pharmacies Offer Immunization Services that are Accessible and Convenient (cont.)

- CDC refers to pharmacies as non-traditional locations to receive vaccines, offering advantages such as community-based locations, access, and convenience\(^1\)
- In the 2010-2011 influenza season, 18.4% of people were vaccinated in a store (e.g., supermarket or drug store)\(^2\)
- Of all vaccinations offered at Walgreens pharmacies, 30.5% were provided during off-clinic hours:
  - weekends (17.4%),
  - evenings (10.2%),
  - and holidays (2.9%) when traditional vaccine providers are likely unavailable\(^3\)

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Other Community Initiatives

Vaccinate Chicago Week: Promote awareness of the importance of receiving an influenza vaccination and to increase vaccination uptake

Texas Meningitis: Implemented a program offering meningitis vaccine services in over 700 locations throughout the state to help college students comply with Texas mandate requiring meningitis shot

Tdap Vaccinations - Provide education and administration of Tdap vaccinations to close contacts of neonates identified in a women’s hospital

Background and History of Vote & Vax Program
Vote & Vax on Election Day(s)

- Founded by SPARC, Inc., a non-profit organization that promotes improving preventive service delivery rates across the U.S.
- Immunization clinics at polling places or in-store on election day
Vote & Vax received early support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and from AARP.
Vote & Vax is a national program that works with local public health providers to assist them in launching vaccination clinics at or near polling places across the country.
Since its first multi-state program in 2004, Vote & Vax has helped provide tens of thousands of influenza vaccinations to at-risk Americans.
Background on Vote & Vax Program (cont.)

• Vote & Vax significantly expanded its efforts in 2008, ultimately delivering 21,434 influenza vaccinations at 331 locations in 42 states and the District of Columbia

• Of those vaccinated through the project, almost half (47.7%) were "new" recipients (did not receive a flu shot in the preceding year or would not have otherwise been vaccinated)

• Walgreens began the process of working with Vote & Vax in June of 2012
Vote & Vax Principles

- Not for the exclusive benefit of voters
- Not a “Get Out the Vote” initiative
- No partisan political activities
- Clinic accessible after people have voted
- Charge for vaccine as at other community flu shot clinics or pharmacies

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Americans should not only have the opportunity to vote but to protect themselves against the flu.

Vote & Vax is a national program of the community health organization SPARC (Sickness Prevention Achieved through Regional Collaboration). We work with all public health providers who would like to offer convenient flu vaccinations at or near polling places across the country.
Vote & Vax Video

Click to play video
2012 Walgreens/Vote & Vax Collaboration
Details of 2012 Walgreens/Vote & Vax Collaboration

• Walgreens partnered with Vote & Vax to administer influenza vaccinations during the November 2012 election:
  • Provided flu shots at Vote & Vax locations across 5 states.
  • Walgreens was a key partner, along with other major pharmacies and health clinics
  • Overall, Vote & Vax 2012 held 1,585 clinics in 48 states, Washington, D.C., Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands
• Participating patients could receive vaccinations at polling place or nearby Walgreens pharmacies
• Vote & Vax was promoted through its national outreach efforts along with regional Walgreens pharmacies
Evaluation of Collaboration

• Vaccine volume for Vote & Vax sites was compared with non-Vote & Vax Walgreens locations
• Vaccination rates were calculated as the number of patients receiving a vaccination per 1,000 pharmacy patients filling a prescription at a Walgreens
• Z-tests were used to compare the percent difference between sites
Results of Collaboration

• The rate of influenza vaccination was **32.7%** higher in Vote & Vax clinics
  — Vote & Vax clinics saw a vaccination rate of **47.3** per 1,000 pharmacy patients
  — Non-Vote & Vax clinics had a vaccination rate of **35.6** per 1,000 pharmacy patients
  — The difference is significant (p < 0.001)
• The average age of vaccinated patients was 55.8 years
• 40.1% were aged 65 years and older
• Females made up 60.2% of those vaccinated

Flu vaccinations per 1,000 pharmacy patients

\[ \text{Vote & Vax: 47.3} \quad \text{Non-Vote & Vax: 35.6} \]

p<0.001
New Flu Shot Patients

• Approximately 58% were new flu shot patients receiving a vaccination in Vote & Vax locations on election day that did not receive a flu shot in the previous 2011-2012 flu season at Walgreens*

• Approximately 62% were new flu shot patients receiving a vaccination in Vote & Vax locations during the 2012-2013 flu season that did not receive a flu shot in the previous 2011-2012 flu season*

• More than two-thirds of non-white Vote & Vax participants in 2012 were not regular flu shot recipients†

• Among the total U.S. population, 2012 coverage estimates were:
  • Overall (>=6 months) = 36.5%
  • Non-Hispanic, White = 38.0%
  • Non-Hispanic, Black = 28.7%
  • Hispanic = 25.0%

*According to Walgreens data
†According to Vote & Vax data

Impact on Public Health Practices Beyond Seasonal Influenza Protection

- Acceptance of program by many local public health departments and the national Medical Reserve Corps as a prototype for a disaster preparedness strategy
- Program staff suggested polling places could be used to provide widespread immunization against the H1N1 influenza virus when the pandemic emerged in 2009
- New attention to the polling place as a platform for other public health interventions, such as delivering other immunizations (pneumococcal, tetanus, hepatitis A and B, etc.), cancer and cardiology screenings, and other preventive health services

Conclusion

• Expanding access and convenience to immunization services in polling places can increase the rate of influenza vaccination
  – Important opportunity among elderly pharmacy patients, who are a large portion of voter turnout
• Community pharmacies can collaborate with state and local health departments to serve as health care providers
• Multiple and convenient access points for vaccinations allow community pharmacies to aid in pandemic response
THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?
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