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National Influenza Vaccine Summit

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **National Influenza Vaccine Summit Announces Recipients of the 2007 Immunization Excellence Award Winners**

Washington, DC, February 14, 2007—The National Influenza Vaccine Summit announces the recipients of the first Annual National Influenza Vaccine Summit (NIVS) Immunization Excellence Awards: Overall 2006-07 Season Activity: The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Baltimore, Maryland; Healthcare Worker Campaign: Virginia Mason Medical Center, Seattle, Washington; and Late Season Activities: GetAFluShot.com, Portland, Oregon.

The awards recognize individuals and organizations that have made extraordinary contributions towards improved adult and/or childhood influenza vaccination rates within their communities. The Awards will be presented at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Immunization Conference on March 5, 2007, in Kansas City, MO.

#### Overall 2006-07 Season Activity

The **Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene** teamed up with the state's local health departments, school system, CDC, MedImmune and the Maryland Partnership for Prevention to create a school-based and community influenza vaccination project that resulted in approximately 50,000 elementary students in Maryland being immunized against influenza. Through statewide school and community-based clinics thousands of children were vaccinated who may not have been immunized otherwise. The project developed two different models, built on the results of pilot projects that demonstrated decreased student and staff absenteeism due to influenza-like illnesses. In addition to protecting thousands of children against influenza, the project also allowed state and local health officials to refine their preparedness and pandemic influenza emergency vaccination plans.

#### Healthcare Worker Campaign

**Virginia Mason Medical Center (VMMC)**, a vertically-integrated health care delivery system, achieved a 98 percent staff vaccination rate. VMMC instituted a mandatory influenza immunization fitness-for-duty policy for all employed staff and other individuals working in its facilities, including community physicians, vendors, volunteers and contingent labor. The organization-wide initiative was supported by physician and administrative executive leadership and the VMMC board of directors. The creativity of VMMC's "flu team" resulted in the creation of respiratory protection kiosks at all entrance/access points system-wide, educational sessions and communications, a

“double shot” campaign with a local coffee company, celebrity vaccinations, utilization of nurse and physician “Flu Champions,” deployment of “flu shot carts,” and engagement of staff across the organization. The program has now gained organization-wide acceptance and achievement of a high vaccination rate that can serve as a model nationwide.

#### Late Season Activities

**GetAFluShot.com** instituted a campaign to provide free flu shots to anyone wanting one, thereby eliminating a major barrier to influenza vaccination. They scheduled over 10 separate clinics in the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area, teaming up with the local non-profit Food Bank. While they did not accept payment or bill any insurance for the vaccinations, they did accept donations for food or money for the local Food Bank. Influenza vaccinations were also given at the local Food Banks. Their initiative greatly increased the number of vaccines administered and also resulted in over \$1,000 and quite a bit of groceries being donated to the Food Bank. Many of the individuals receiving immunizations had never had a flu shot before, did not have insurance, and thanked the vaccinators with tears of appreciation. The influenza vaccine was donated by GetAFluShot.com and the nurses volunteered their time. The efforts of GetAFluShot.com received coverage from the area’s major daily newspaper, two television stations and several radio stations. The efforts of this activity helped ensure that vaccine did not go to waste during the winter season.

#### Honorable Mentions

The Summit received many outstanding nominations that demonstrated innovative approaches to increasing influenza vaccination rates. Runner-up recognitions go to the following: Overall 2006-07 Season Activity: Kaiser Permanente Medical Group, Northern California Region; Healthcare Worker Campaign: Waverly Health Center (Hospital); Late Season Activities: Kaiser Permanente Medical Group, Northern California Region. Special appreciation goes to all that submitted nominations.

#### About the National Influenza Vaccine Summit

The National Influenza Vaccine Summit started in the year 2000, is co-sponsored by the American Medical Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Summit is an action-oriented entity with over 400 members who represent over 100 public and private organizations with an interest in addressing and resolving influenza and influenza vaccine issues. Summit participants include healthcare professionals, public health professionals, vaccine manufacturers and distributors, consumers, and others interested in preventing vaccine-preventable diseases. The Summit convenes each year to coordinate and collaborate in influenza prevention activities.

**Prevent Influenza Now!**

Sponsored by the National Influenza Vaccine Summit