

Community Immunizer

- Trends experienced
- Ideas to increase immunization rates and number of providers

Decline in 2007 shot counts

- We all experienced a decline in 2007 public clinic #'s as compared to 2006.
- We feel this is largely attributed to lack of media coverage and overall awareness of influenza, as well as lack of urgency to be vaccinated because the vaccine was in such good supply.
- People hear the message that they can get vaccinated over a several month period and procrastinate.

Expectations for 2008

- Counter the "I didn't get vaccinated and didn't get sick last year" as well as "the vaccine wasn't very effective in 2007" mentality.
- Drive the message that this years vaccine formulation and three strain change is a direct result of poor efficacy in 2007, and make people aware that vaccine has been a match in 16 of the last 19 years.

Barriers with supply

- Some of our members were not able to receive excise tax refund on unused vaccine because some of the distributors had informed the provider that they weren't equipped to handle the return.

Increasing Immunization Rates

- **Broader recommendations** - 6 months to 18 y/o is a great step in the right direction.
- We support continuing to work towards universal recommendation and encourage the CDC to push the message.

Increasing Immunization Rates

- We feel that a broader recommendation will directly tie into another barrier many of us face, **increased coverage with in the health plans**. Having cost savings information more widely available to help medical directors recognize the cost savings and improved quality of life as a result of broader immunization. Many of us see people that refuse immunization because they have to pay out of pocket

Increasing Immunization Rates

- **Reimbursement Rates** - More attractive rates increase the number of providers. Medicare increase a few years back brought a whole new set of providers back into the adult immunization market.

Increasing Immunization Rates

- **Increased education** - Drive the message that flu shots and FluMist are not just for those at high risk.
- Moving the recommendation for "anyone who wants to reduce the likelihood of becoming ill or spreading influenza" to the top of all recommendations beyond the MMWR, including the VIS.
- Many of us saw articles on who should get a flu shot, and this group, the majority of the population, is often not included.
- Additionally, a clear and loud statement addressing the safety of thimerosal. All of us were faced with an increase in recipients requesting thimerosal free vaccine. Not properly educating individuals on this concern can cause a major barrier to achieving success with the new recommendations for children under 18.

Increasing Immunization Rates

Communication from manufacturers:

- Early (and often) manufacturing updates. Production and distribution directly affect the planning of public immunization events.

Increasing Immunization Rates

- **Increase in PSA's** - specifically in September - November.
- Preach the benefits of influenza immunization and raise awareness of the safety of the vaccine as well as protection of self and others.