



September 2013

Influential News



The National Influenza Vaccination Disparities Partnership (NIVDP) is comprised of multi-sector partners who work to promote vaccination among underserved populations including African Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians/Alaska Natives. The partnership and this newsletter are supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

NIVDP PARTNERS ADDRESS MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT FLU VACCINATION

In this edition of **Influential News**, we invite you to learn more about a variety of approaches used by trusted health experts and advocates to provide accurate information about the flu vaccine. Dr. Winston Price, a Georgia-based pediatrician and longtime NIVDP spokesperson, explains why it is important for parents and their children not to delay flu vaccination. Popular Hispanic mommy bloggers team up with a medical expert to debunk myths about flu vaccination. And Wisconsin-based Gerald L. Ignace Indian Health Center, a clinic that serves nearly 12,000 patients, sets an example of how to address commonly held misconceptions within Indian Country.

SPOTLIGHT ON PARTNERS

DON'T DELAY VACCINATION AGAINST THE FLU: ADVICE FROM THE EXPERT

At the start of every flu season, Dr. Winston Price, Chair of the Department of Pediatrics at Memorial Hospital and Manor in Bainbridge, Georgia, tells parents not to delay flu vaccination. In the U.S., the flu season can begin as early as October. It can take two weeks for the flu vaccine to take effect, so it is important for both parents and children to get vaccinated as the school year begins. Dr. Price's advice to parents is the same every year: "Flu vaccination is one of the most important ways to prevent influenza illness. I encourage parents to make flu vaccination a part of their back-to-school preparations during the early fall." According to the CDC, young children are among the populations at greatest risk for serious flu complications like bronchitis or pneumonia. Everyone 6 months and older should get the flu vaccine each year.

Dr. Price is also the Director of Health Information Technology at the National Medical Association's Cobb Institute, where he has helped oversee initiatives to reduce the impact of the flu in medically underserved communities. He has been a partner with NIVDP since its initial launch in Houston in 2011.



Dr. Winston Price, Memorial Hospital and Manor, Bainbridge, Georgia, and Dr. Anne Schuchat, CDC, NCIIRD

HISPANIC MOMMY BLOGGERS SPEAK OUT DURING NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION AWARENESS MONTH

In recognition of National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM) in August, Hispanic mommy bloggers teamed up with a medical expert to address common misconceptions about flu vaccines. Popular Latino-oriented health websites featured mommy bloggers' personal stories about flu vaccination and excerpts from an interview session conducted by mommy bloggers with Dr. Carlos Rodríguez-Fierro, a New Orleans-based cardiologist and NIVDP spokesperson.

Hispanic mommy bloggers took aim at popular myths that often discourage people from getting vaccinated against the flu. For example, writing for the website *Growing Up Bilingual*, Paula Bendfeldt-Díaz emphasized the safety of the flu vaccine, citing the rigorous process by which vaccines are developed, manufactured, approved, and monitored in the U.S. In a piece for *Mama Noticias*, a Spanish-language site, Sandra Pérez Ramírez singled out benefits of the flu vaccine for children who are returning to school, including lowered risk of getting sick with the flu and passing it on to their classmates, or even catching the flu from others.



Growing Up Bilingual mommy blogger website

OVERCOMING MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT FLU VACCINATION IN INDIAN COUNTRY

The flu shot doesn't work. The flu vaccine can cause the flu. I wash my hands frequently so I don't need the flu vaccine. According to health officials and advocates, misconceptions continue to discourage people from getting the influenza vaccination. But as the Milwaukee, Wisconsin-based Gerald L. Ignace Indian Health Center (GLIHC) has shown, much can be done locally to spread the word that the flu vaccine is the best protection available against the flu. During the flu season, GLIHC's approach to flu vaccination outreach includes weekly vaccination clinics, regular conversations with patients about the flu vaccine, and the dissemination of culturally appropriate brochures and other materials. According to Desiree Schocko, a licensed nurse at GLIHC, "We always remind patients to get the vaccine at the start of the flu season to allow the body time to build immunity."



Gerald L. Ignace Indian Health Center, Inc. Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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