

InFLUential News

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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).



PARTNERS TAP LOCAL NETWORKS TO PROMOTE FLU VACCINATION AWARENESS

Whether addressing an outbreak on a mass scale, such as the one in Puerto Rico last fall, or working in local communities, in 2013 our partners drew on their intimate understanding of the groups they serve to promote flu vaccination awareness. Find out how new partners successfully tapped into their networks to hold influenza vaccination events and public forums to educate at-risk populations about the vaccine's benefits. Also learn how partners acted locally to generate an unprecedented level of media exposure during National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW), an annual observance which took place December 8-14th.

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BALTIMORE NONPROFIT EDUCATES AT-RISK GROUPS ABOUT FLU VACCINE'S BENEFITS

Women Accepting Responsibility (WAR) has been serving Baltimore City for more than 15 years. They are an established provider of health screening and education, counseling, and housing services for at-risk groups ranging from people living with HIV/AIDS and mental illness to formerly incarcerated women. On October 2nd and 25th, 2013, WAR drew on their extensive network of community partners—including churches, schools, and neighborhood-based organizations—to organize their first NIVDP flu vaccination events. This grassroots approach resulted in a total of 130 vaccinations.

BJ Shaneman, Nurse Manager of BJ's Women's Wellness Program, was the lead organizer for both vaccination events. According to Shaneman, they "became educational events more than just flu clinics" because attendees felt comfortable in the presence of Walgreens pharmacists who were able to answer their questions about the vaccine. Shaneman is optimistic about prospects for future collaboration with NIVDP because, among other reasons, flu vaccination promotion activities complement WAR's mission and goals. "WAR is committed to creating a healthier Baltimore and people are dying from the flu, so flu vaccinations are needed. It's that simple," she said.

BJ Shaneman, Nurse Manager of BJ's Women's Wellness Program, Women Accepting Responsibility

AMERICAN INDIAN COMMUNITY HOUSE OF NEW YORK CITY ENCOURAGES URBAN INDIANS TO GET VACCINATED

The American Indian Community House (AICH) of New York City joined NIVDP in the fall of 2013 to promote influenza vaccination among the country's largest urban American Indian population. Soon thereafter, AICH helped administer flu vaccinations at a luncheon for community elders and at the organization's annual Indian Market, which was held during NIVW.

AICH is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1969 to improve and promote the well-being of the American Indian community and foster intercultural understanding. Today, AICH is a multi-faceted social support center that serves the health, social, and cultural needs of the estimated 112,000 American Indians representing 72 tribes throughout the New York City tri-state area. "We recognize that Native people can be hit hard by flu complications, particularly elders," said Shaylynn Raphaelito, AICH Health Department Director. "This year, we made it our responsibility to get the flu shots to our elders and community as early as possible."

"With the majority of Native people now living in urban areas, their access to health care can be limited," said Raphaelito. "By working in partnership with the CDC and NIVDP, the AICH has the opportunity to improve awareness, make the flu vaccine more accessible, and increase the number of vaccinations among Natives in New York City."



Louis Mofsie, Director of the Thunderbird American Indian Dancers, helps kick off AICH's Indian Market



**NEW IMMUNIZATION
COALITION VACCINATES
THOUSANDS OF PUERTO
RICANS AGAINST THE FLU**

Public health advocates in Puerto Rico established the Coalición de Vacunación de Puerto Rico (VOCES) in 2013 with the goal of improving flu vaccination rates and reducing flu-related illness and mortality on the island. So far, our new NIVDP partner has engaged more than 40 partner organizations to support outreach and education initiatives ranging from mass vaccination events to forums and symposiums.



Lilliam Rodríguez, President and Founder, Coalición de Vacunación de Puerto Rico (VOCES)

VOCES has helped galvanize thousands of Puerto Ricans to get vaccinated at a time when, according to CDC and Puerto Rico officials, the island has been hit by one of its worst influenza outbreaks in recent years. Between August and December, VOCES staff worked in tandem with their counterparts at the Puerto Rico Department of Health vaccination program to administer more than 40,000 flu vaccinations at large public events across the island, including more than 11,000 vaccinations at Puerto Rico's second annual Flupalooza festival held in San Juan.

In keeping with the Puerto Rico Department of Health's theme of *Vacúnate en Familia*, VOCES aims to make flu vaccination more of a family affair in Puerto Rico. "We look forward to building on our efforts to increase access to the flu vaccine among those hardest hit by influenza—including pregnant women, children under the age of 5, seniors, and people with chronic health conditions such as asthma and diabetes—and reaching families will continue to be an essential part of this," said Lilliam Rodríguez, President and Founder of VOCES.

**COMMUNITY-DRIVEN
APPROACHES BOOST
MEDIA COVERAGE
DURING NIVW**

NIVDP partners began laying the groundwork months in advance to secure media placements during NIVW. Through innovative, community-driven approaches, they generated coverage in 148 media outlets—an all-time high for the partnership. Highlights include interviews with CDC and NIVDP subject matter experts, online postings by African American and Latina mommy bloggers, and feature stories in Indian Country Today, Black Health Matters, and CNN en Español.

Several new partners tapped into their networks to organize press conferences and vaccination events. The Center for Native American Health at the University of New Mexico joined forces with a Native American charter high school and a national tribal community college to host vaccination events on December 10th in Albuquerque that were covered by KASA-TV, the local Fox affiliate, and Native America Calling, a national call-in radio show. White Memorial Medical Center (WMMC) teamed up with South Los Angeles Health Projects and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health to organize a press conference and a vaccination event on December 12th in East Los Angeles. The activities at WMMC were covered by several local Spanish-language television outlets—including Univision's KMEX-TV, Estrella TV's KRCA-TV, and Azteca America's KAZA-TV—and by La Opinión, the nation's largest Spanish-language newspaper by circulation.

In Flint, Michigan, the Universal Kidney Foundation co-sponsored a series of forums to raise awareness about the benefits of the flu vaccine. These events were covered by local African American radio stations such as WDZZ 92.7 FM and WFLT 1420 AM. In Virginia, the Richmond City Health District co-sponsored two vaccination events on December 9th and garnered coverage that same week in media outlets such as R&B radio station Kiss 105.7 FM and the Richmond Times-Dispatch.



Dr. Brian Johnston of White Memorial Medical Center in Los Angeles discusses flu vaccination on CNN en Español

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