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Influential News



The National Influenza Vaccination Disparities Partnership (NIVDP) is comprised of multi-sector partners who work to promote flu 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 Promote Flu Vaccination to Reach Hispanics

In this special issue of *Influential News*, the NIVDP recognizes new and existing activities and partnerships that promote annual flu vaccination among Hispanic communities through Hispanic-focused webinars, health events, conferences and initiatives.

Activities included:

- Two webinars, hosted by CDC and the NIVDP, were held in April and May 2016 for partners to gain insight on best practices and strategies for Hispanic outreach and social media;
- Dr. Carmen Sofía Arriola, a CDC subject matter expert (SME), presented at the Fourth Annual VOCES (Immunization Coalition of Puerto Rico) Conference on April 29, 2016, in San Juan, Puerto Rico;
- Vecino Health Centers, a new NIVDP partner located in Houston, Texas, serves a large Hispanic population and annually promotes flu vaccination through a neighborhood-centered approach; and
- The United States-México Border Health Commission (BHC), a long-term NIVDP partner, continues to promote flu vaccination during their annual Border Binational Health Month in October.

SPOTLIGHTING NIVDP ACTIVITIES AND PARTNERS

NIVDP PARTNERS BENEFIT FROM CDC WEBINARS

For the 2015-2016 flu season, the NIVDP hosted a series of webinars on diverse topics related to influenza promotion. As part of the series, two webinars were held for partners on Hispanic outreach and social media.

On April 19, 2016, the NIVDP hosted the webinar titled **Social Media 101** for NIVDP partners interested in learning more about how to share flu promotion messages through social media. The webinar educated NIVDP partners on best practices for social media and leveraging resources for partners who work with Hispanic populations. Natacha Ginocchio, Editor-in-Chief of *Alma Emprendedora Magazine* and founder of Azucar Communications, presented on the importance of researching audiences to develop effective social media strategies. Other webinar presenters included Jeannine Hunter, Innovation Specialist for 18F and web writer for Children's National Health Systems, and Alfonso Pernía, social media and cultural

communications specialist with the NIVDP. They explained resources, such as **Hootsuite**, **Tweetdeck**, **Buffer**, and **SocialOomph**, and provided case studies. NIVDP partners who participated learned how to build a brand, engage an audience, develop and schedule social media content, and analyze social media metrics.

Below are tips to increase social media engagement:

- Integrate your social media efforts to your overall marketing, advertising, Puerto Rico and grassroots campaigns
- Respond to your audience within 24 hours
- Be transparent
- Sponsor posts based on your audience's preferences



- Add celebrities, local personalities and influencers that already promote healthy behaviors and can create original content for your brand
- Create events that affect your audience directly and use the occasion to make an impact in the community you're trying to capture

On May 17, 2016, CDC's Division of Emergency Operations hosted the webinar ***Engaging the Hispanic Community: A Health Communications Perspective***. Presenters identified the social landscape, language and media preferences for Hispanic populations and addressed best practices for reaching Hispanic audiences.

Best practices include:

- Developing responsive engagement strategies that resonant with the growing Hispanic/Latino community
- Creating communication products that contain core community values so messages resonant
- Using the cardinal rules of risk communication as guideposts for the message development process
- Engaging cultural interpreters as a means of understanding best means to disseminate messages in a community



Natacha Ginocchio,
Founder, Azucar Communications,
Editor-in-Chief, *Alma Emprendedora Magazine*

These and other webinars are available on the **CDC NIVDP website**, for partners to learn from and share.

VOCES INVITES CDC SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT TO PRESENT AT THE IMMUNIZATION CONFERENCE IN PUERTO RICO

NIVDP partner, VOCES (Immunization Coalition of Puerto Rico), invited Dr. Carmen Sofía Arriola to speak at the fourth annual conference, themed "Prevention is Action," in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on April 29, 2016. Dr. Arriola is a Senior Service Fellow and subject matter expert in the Epidemiology and Prevention Branch in CDC's Influenza Division. In addition, she holds a doctorate of veterinary medicine, a doctorate of global disease epidemiology and control, and a master of health sciences in biostatistics.

The two-day conference attracted more than 425 health care professionals, including doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and health educators. Health experts addressed medical issues and clinical recommendations for immunization practices in Puerto Rico.

Dr. Arriola's presentation, "Seasonal Influenza: Current Issues, Prevention, and Control," focused on the impact of flu in Puerto Rico. Dr. Arriola elaborated on the important role that health care professionals play in vaccination uptake among patients. During her presentation, she explained that health care professionals

should encourage more pharmacies to administer vaccines for underserved populations and identify non-traditional settings for flu vaccination promotional events, such as faith-based organizations or health fairs. She stated that “the NIVDP and local partners like VOCES help counter misconceptions about the flu and address barriers to the vaccine.”

VOCES is a nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing immunization rates in Puerto Rico. The organization coordinates large-scale health fairs and partners with the Puerto Rico Department of Health to offer flu vaccines for all Puerto Ricans. VOCES has been an NIVDP partner since 2012.



Dr. Carmen Sofía Arriola,
Senior Service Fellow,
CDC's Influenza Division

VECINO HEALTH CENTER'S NEIGHBORLY APPROACH REACHES UNDERSERVED RESIDENTS IN HOUSTON, TEXAS



Vecino Health Centers (Vecino) joined the NIVDP after The Immunization Partnership invited Vecino to attend an NIVDP

workshop on January 26, 2016, in Houston, Texas. The workshop provided a platform for Vecino staff to share their best practices for reaching out to Hispanics and promoting flu vaccination. Vecino will support the NIVDP by committing to have all of their staff vaccinated next flu season and displaying and distributing **CDC print materials** at both **Vecino centers**.

Vecino (which means neighbor) was founded by a group of local pastors in 2001 to address the urgent need for primary healthcare in the Houston community of Denver Harbor, an economically challenged neighborhood. Under the leadership of CEO Daniel Montez, Vecino has grown to

include two centers that operate in Northeast Houston and serve approximately 10,000 people, of which approximately 68 percent are Hispanic.

True to its name, health care staff at Vecino promote flu vaccination one neighbor at a time. Every year, Vecino partners with Head Start programs, local schools, and churches. Dr. Juan Olivares, Vecino's Pediatric Director, explained, “As our patients learn about the benefits of annual flu vaccination, they can pass on their knowledge to other family members, neighbors, and friends. As a physician, one of my greatest responsibilities is patient education. I feel confident that the time I spend on educating patients is making an impact.”

Medical staff projects that more than 2,000 patients will get vaccinated through their two clinics for the 2016-2017 flu season. Mr. Montez said, “Vecino looks forward to working with the NIVDP next flu season and collaborating with another NIVDP partner, the Immunization Partnership in Houston.”

UNITED STATES-MEXICO BORDER HEALTH COMMISSION AND THE NIVDP TO COLLABORATE DURING BORDER BINATIONAL HEALTH MONTH

The **United States-Mexico Border Health Commission (BHC)**, an NIVDP partner since 2011, annually sponsors **Border Binational Health Month**, which is the largest mobilization effort in the Americas, to improve the health of people living near the United States-Mexico border. The BHC and the NIVDP will promote flu vaccination during Border Binational Health Month in October 2016.

The NIVDP's long-standing relationship with the BHC gives NIVDP partners the unique opportunity during Border Binational Health Month to network with federal secretaries of health, chief health officers of the ten border states, and prominent community health professionals from both countries. These health professionals are knowledgeable about the challenges of border communities, such as those in Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas in the United States and Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León, Sonora, and Tamaulipas in México.

The BHC and the NIVDP partnership has resulted in thousands of people getting vaccinated over the past five years. In addition, the BHC continues to disseminate **CDC Spanish-language print materials** to their community partners, including promotora groups. José Luis Velasco, Executive Director of BHC, stated "I am thrilled that, through our partnership with the NIVDP, Walgreens will provide a caravan to bring flu vaccinations to communities with limited access and many barriers to healthcare." The BHC will launch a social marketing campaign to promote flu vaccination for Hispanics next fall that will complement activities planned for Border Binational Health Month. In addition, the BHC is developing new marketing materials that will be available next flu season.

The new marketing campaign will build on the many activities that BHC has coordinated in the past. As a long-term partner in the fight against the flu, BHC has:

- Supported the Border Influenza Surveillance Network that operate sentinel sites;
- Conducted weekly influenza activity reporting in the binational tristate of Southwestern New Mexico, Northern Chihuahua, and West Texas;
- Sponsored the Binational Pandemic Avian Flu Forum to promote coordinated actions related to binational pandemic influenza planning, preparing the state for the Binational Pandemic Avian Flu Table Top Exercise, which is the final installment of a two-phase binational influenza initiative; and
- Sponsored the annual border component of **National Infant Immunization Week/Vaccination Week** in the Americas to promote vaccination in the U.S.-Mexico border region.

Partners working along the U.S.-Mexico border can share their activities by sending event information to Lorraine Navarrette, Binational Operations Coordinator, at Lorraine.navarrette@hhs.gov.



José Luis Velasco,
Executive Director,
U.S. Section of the BHC, HHS

Share your ideas, photos, and events with us. We will feature them in upcoming issues of In**FLU**ential News.

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BECOME A PARTNER. JOIN YOUR COLLEAGUES AND SPREAD THE WORD.