

EP01.10

Strategies to improve uptake of annual influenza vaccination rates among healthcare workers in community-care

Teck-Yee Wong(1,2), W-T Ong(1), I Leong(1)

(1) Department of Continuing & Community Care, Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Singapore

(2) Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Corresponding author: Dr Teck-Yee Wong, Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Continuing & Community Care, Singapore, Singapore. E-mail: teck_yee_wong@ttsh.com.sg

Background & Aim: Annual influenza vaccination is an important strategy against healthcare workers (HCWs) contracting influenza illness and transmitting to their patients. Influenza vaccination of HCWs decreases HCW absenteeism, patient mortality and enhancing patient safety. However, rates of annual influenza vaccination among HCW have been reported to be low worldwide. Prior to June 2014, vaccination rate in our department has been suboptimal (<60%). Based in a tertiary centre, our HCWs work in multidisciplinary teams and work almost entirely in community-based settings, interacting with patients, caregivers and communities all over Singapore. Because of this, a team was set-up to review the literature and propose strategies to improve vaccination uptake in June 2014.

Method: Free staff vaccination, email reminders and mobile vaccination team has already been in place since 2011. After literature review and informal discussions with departmental staff, the team decided to employ the following additional measures from July 2014 (prior to the 2014 NH influenza season): staff education and staff declaration form indicating understanding of the benefits of influenza vaccination. This was an idea modified from institutions using declination form. Due to staff turnover, all new staff is required to fill up the form. Mandatory vaccination was not considered as it was not a hospital policy.

Results: Vaccination rate among HCW improved from 48.1% (Jun – Aug 14) to 60.7% (Sept - Nov 14; $p=0.3$) and 100% (May-Jun 15; $p <0.001$).

Conclusions: A strategy of employing different approaches has increased HCW vaccination rate. This may be due to educating HCWs about safety of the vaccine and the importance of vaccination in patient-care and removing barriers to access by HCWs.