

Promoting Vaccination Among Ethnic Minorities through Media and Audience Outreach



BACKGROUND



With the arrival of the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus in the United States, and the subsequent ‘pandemic’ declaration from the World Health Organization, there was an urgent need for a communications campaign to promote immunization against the virus. The Academy for Educational Development (AED) developed and organized a public awareness campaign on behalf of the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

FORMATIVE RESEARCH

Special attention was given to African-Americans and Latinos to guide customized messages and products to dispel mistrust and misperceptions. Within these segments, further groupings were made to ascertain the information needs of mothers, contacts with young infants, young adults (19-24 years), and people with underlying health conditions (e.g., asthma and diabetes).

OBJECTIVES

- Explore current awareness, attitudes, beliefs, and concerns surrounding the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus and immunization practices, especially among ethnic audiences
- Examine reactions to draft consumer health information and materials being prepared for the general public and segments of the population considered at risk for the 2009 H1N1 virus



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METHODS



Over 100 focus groups were conducted with priority audiences in eight cities in June, August, and October 2009 to gauge attitudes and beliefs about H1N1 influenza, and to receive feedback on concepts, messages, and products. Additional responses were garnered from online surveys completed by over 1600 participants. The focus groups provided an opportunity to also test materials in Spanish.

OBSERVATIONS

- Groups initially expressed hesitancy about getting the vaccine for themselves or their children
- High concern about vaccine safety as there would not be time to adequately test the safety of the vaccine
- Young adults did not believe the 2009 H1N1 influenza to be a threat
- African Americans had a higher level of concern about vaccine safety among all the ethnic groups
- Hispanics expressed concern about H1N1 influenza being considered a “Mexican” flu
- Hispanics responded well to messages that addressed the health of their family

CREATION OF MATERIALS

Goals:


- (1) Develop messages and identify outlets that would create and maintain visibility for H1N1 among minority groups
- (2) Communicate the dangers of the virus and the benefits and safety of the vaccine

Materials included:

- Television and radio PSAs in Spanish
- Matte articles in Spanish
- Print materials (including posters and ads)
- Radio media tours
- Satellite media tours
- Ethnic media roundtables
- Bus advertising in Spanish
- Collaborations with minority health partners (e.g., Blackdoctor.org and National Hispanic Medical Association)
- Earned media interviews (e.g., Russ Parr’s Morning Show, Montel Across America, Tom Joyner, Telemundo, Univision)
- Special events (e.g., National Influenza Vaccination Week)



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IT'S A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY”**
-President Barack Obama-

Do your part to protect yourself, your family, and your community. **Get vaccinated.**

The H1N1 flu vaccine is safe, effective, and made just like the regular flu vaccine. It's the best way to protect against the flu.

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VACUNARSE ES PROTEGERSE

EXECUTION



ETHNIC MEDIA ROUNDTABLES - Occurred from October to December 2009 in cities where minority populations are highly concentrated. These cities included Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Phoenix, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. These news briefings provided a forum for an intimate dialogue between ethnic media reporters, CDC experts, and local health officials about the impact of seasonal and H1N1 influenza on various populations, the seriousness of seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 influenza viruses, and the importance of vaccination. When possible, the availability of vaccine was mentioned, given the local health department's vaccine distribution plan. Examples of media outlets who attended the briefing and reported to their communities about H1N1 and the need for vaccination included: Asian Pacific News, Sing Tao Daily, Filipinas Magazine, Epoch Times, El Tecolote, China Press, El Bohemio, Asian Journal, Grupo Radio Centro, Koreatown Daily, Washington Hispanic, The Muslim Link, Metro Latina USA, The Pakistan Post, Zethiopia, El Pregonero, Azizah Magazine, India Tribune, Telemundo 47, Univision, La Raza, POLSKIE Radio, and Indian Post.

PARTNERSHIP OUTREACH - Successful partnerships with ethnic minority organizations included the Association of Black Cardiologists, Blackdoctor.org, the National Hispanic Medical Association, the National Association of Hispanic Nurses, and the National Latina Health Network. Support was given to the campaign by posting web buttons, links and materials on their organization's websites or in their newsletters.

OTHER EARNED MEDIA - Interviews were set up for CDC spokespersons on the Russ Parr Morning Show and on Montel Across America. Both shows are popular among African Americans. There was also an article featured in the December issue of Latinovations "La Plaza" newsletter, urging Hispanics to get vaccinated. Tom Joyner got vaccinated and promoted vaccination on his morning show, which attracts over 8 million listeners weekly.

EVALUATION

Traditional and media measurements were used to evaluate the success of the ethnic media roundtables and other media outreach activities

Television/radio/print impressions from the Ethnic Media Roundtable in 8 cities:	61.3 MILLION
Audience impressions from the city bus ad campaign	OVER 56 MILLION
Listenership from Russ Parr, Tom Joyner, and Montel Across America radio interviews in 7 cities	16.5 MILLION
Circulation of Spanish H1N1 matte article	OVER 250K
Subscribers to “La Plaza” Newsletter in which the H1N1 article was featured	20K

