

Improving Adult Vaccination Rates Through Medical Student-Led Waiting Room Education

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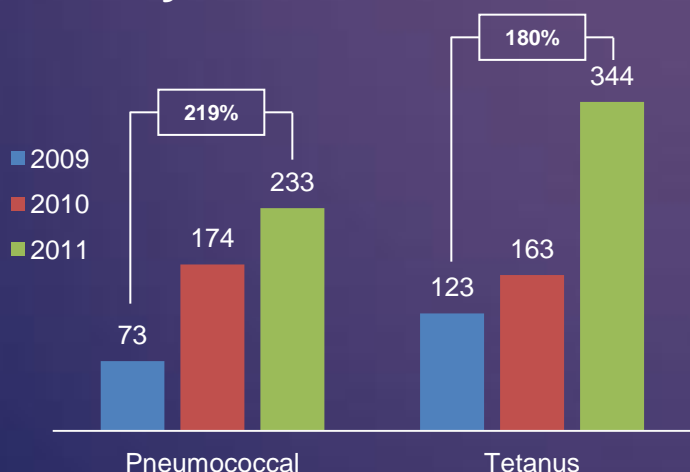
Background: According to the Healthy People 2010 initiative, adult vaccination rates remain low (goal: 80%, observed: 25%) despite the effectiveness of vaccines for preventing life-threatening diseases. The current study examines the impact of a medical student-led vaccination education program in a low-income, high-risk community.

Setting: Free Community Health Clinic (CHC) in Chicago

Population: A high risk (>50% diabetic), ethnically diverse (53% Latino, 34% Caucasian of whom 22% are Polish immigrants, 7% African American, 6% other) patient population without health insurance and with income below 250% of the Federal Poverty Line.

Project Description: Beginning in July 2009, students from Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine participated in weekly visits to CHC. Following current CDC guidelines, students gave waiting room presentations on adult vaccinations in the target languages of the clinic population: English, Spanish and Polish. Students initiated one-on-one counseling with interested patients to make personalized lists of recommended vaccines to discuss with their physicians. All interactions were supervised by faculty. Patients were tracked for twelve months to see if they subsequently received any of the vaccinations offered at CHC. These patients were compared with a randomly selected group of control patients who did not receive any counseling. A chi-squared test was used to determine whether counseling changed vaccination outcomes significantly.

Yearly Vaccinations at CHC



2010 All Vaccinations Cohort

Group	Totals	Vaccine Given	No Vaccine	% Vaccinated
Counseling	147	67	80	45.6%
No Counseling	160	21	139	13.1%

Chi Squared Analysis

X ²	39.46
α	0.05
p-value	<0.0001

Risk Analysis

Relative Risk	3.47
95% CI	2.25-5.37

Results/Lessons Learned: From 2009 to 2011, 280 patients were counseled during 19 educational sessions between July and December each year. Our data show that students, under faculty guidance, were able to develop a program that increased vaccination rates at CHC. The major limitation of the program was patient saturation, which can be alleviated by expanding the program to bimonthly sessions on varying days of the week, year-round. Ultimately, patient-centered waiting room education can be an inexpensive and effective means of increasing vaccination rates.