

Maricopa County Department of Public Health



HELP US SET A STATEWIDE FLU VACCINATION RECORD!

To support Arizona Infection Prevention Week (IPW), Maricopa County Department of Public Health will be offering free flu shots on October 18, 2011 from 10:00am to 2:00pm. Flu shots will be offered on first-come, first-served basis. Get there early!

Office of Community Health Nursing

Health Care Workers and Flu Vaccines

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends annual influenza vaccination for all health care workers (HCWs).

Influenza immunization rates among HCWs must be increased. Only 36% of HCWs are immunized each year. —National Foundation for Infectious Diseases

Unvaccinated HCWs can be a key cause of outbreaks in health care settings.

Health care workers who do not get vaccinated are at risk for contracting influenza- a potentially long and serious illness, or transmitting influenza to their vulnerable patients.

Misperceptions about the flu vaccine

- The vaccine causes the flu.
- I received the flu vaccine previously but still got the flu. Therefore, the flu vaccine does not work.
- I haven't had the flu in the past several years. Therefore, I'm not at risk for infection and illness myself, or at risk for transmitting infection to the patients in my care.
- The flu vaccine causes adverse effects.

There have been several documented outbreaks illustrating the problem of influenza transmission between HCWs and patients in:

- ❖ Organ transplant units¹
- ❖ Long-term care facilities²
- ❖ Neonatal intensive care units³

One reason HCWs transmit influenza is they often continue to work while infected with the virus.

¹Malavaud S, Malavaud B, Sanders K, et al. Nosocomial outbreak of influenza virus (H3N2) infection in a solid organ transplant department. *Transplantation*. 2001;72(3):535-7.

²CDC. Outbreak of influenza A in a nursing home—New York, Dec. 1991-Jan. 1992. *MMWR*. 1992; Feb 4(18):129-131.

³Cunney RJ, Bialachowski A, Thornley D, Smaill FM, Pennie RA. An outbreak of influenza A in a neonatal intensive care unit. *Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol*. 2000;23(10):615-9.