Title of Intervention: Postcard reminders to improve influenza immunization compliance

Intervention Strategies: Individual Education

Purpose of the Intervention: To improve influenza immunization compliance

Population: Individuals at high risk for serious complications from influenza infection

Setting: University of Washington Family Medical Center; health care facility-based, home-based

Partners: Health center

Intervention Description:
- Individual Education: Participants were randomly assigned to one of four groups: a control group receiving a neutral postcard, a control group receiving no postcard, an intervention group receiving a postcard with a personal message from their physician or an intervention group receiving a Health Belief Model postcard emphasizing severity of the flu, susceptibility of older persons to the flu and the benefits of the vaccine.

Theory: Health Belief Model

Resources Required:
- Staff/Volunteers: Staff to conduct follow-up interviews and perform mailings
- Training: Not mentioned
- Technology: Computer, analysis software
- Space: Not mentioned
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Health Belief Model postcards, neutral postcards, personal postcards, postage, patient addresses
- Evaluation: Phones, access to records

Evaluation:
- Design: Randomized trial
- Methods and Measures:
  - Initial demographic data were recorded when patients were assigned to experimental groups.
  - Further data gathering occurred when study patients came to the medical center for immunization or when they were called and interviewed by phone to determine if they had been immunized.

Outcomes:
- Short Term Impact: Not measured
- Long Term Impact: The influenza immunization rate was found to be significantly higher for persons receiving the Health Belief Model postcard compared with persons receiving no postcard or a neutral postcard. The personal postcard, although effective overall, was not more effective after adjusting for age and prior immunization experience.

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: The results support the notion that the Health Belief Model is effective as a source of material for health-related advertising campaigns. In addition, for the health care provider, the observed effectiveness of the Health Belief Model postcard suggests that the Health Belief Model may be a useful approach in counseling designed to change unhealthy behaviors. The study suggests that a Health Belief Model postcard is one effective way for practitioners to promote vaccines for high-risk patients.

Citation(s):