

**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):**

Larson, E.B., et al., Do postcard reminders improve influenza compliance? A prospective trial of different postcard "cues". *Med Care*, 1982. 20(6): p. 639-48.