

Title of Intervention: Postal reminders and free immunizations

Intervention Strategies: Individual Education, Environments and Policies

Purpose of the Intervention: To increase influenza immunization rates using postal reminders and free vaccines

Population: Participants aged 65 or older identified as being at risk for influenza by their general practitioners

Setting: Countries of Funen and Vejle, Denmark; health care facility-based

Partners: General Practitioners National Health Service

Intervention Description:

- Individual Education: Study participants received reminder postcards, reminder postcards plus free vaccine or neither. Postcards contained information about the importance of influenza immunization and reminded patients to get vaccinated.
- Environments and Policies: Free immunizations were offered to a portion of participants.

Theory: Not mentioned

Resources Required:

- Staff/Volunteers: Staff to send mailings and monitor response status
- Training: Not mentioned
- Technology: Computers, printers
- Space: Not mentioned
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Patient list from the National Health Service, postcards for mailings, influenza vaccines
- Evaluation: Epi-Info version 6 (statistical software)

Evaluation:

- Design: Randomized controlled trial
- Methods and Measures:
 - Individual data collected included indication of immunization, immunization history, knowledge, gender

Outcomes:

- Short Term Impact: Analysis showed increased knowledge about the importance of being immunized and increased access to influenza immunization.
- Long Term Impact: Participants who received a reminder postcard and a free vaccine had the highest rates. Both groups receiving postcards had significantly higher immunization rates.

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: Postal invitations improved immunization rates for elderly high-risk patients and free immunizations further improved that rate. Immunization fees are barriers to many patients and may prevent healthcare providers from recommending the immunizations.

Citation(s):

Nexoe, J., J. Kragstrup, et al. (1997). "Impact of postal invitations and user fee on influenza vaccination rates among the elderly. A randomized controlled trial in general practice." *Scand J Prim Health Care* 15(2): 109-12.