

Title of Intervention: Low-literacy patient education tool

Intervention Strategies: Individual Education

Purpose of the Intervention: To increase rates of pneumococcal immunization

Population: Older adults and high-risk individuals

Setting: Ambulatory care clinic in inner-city Atlanta, Georgia; health care facility-based

Partners: Health Educators in the Pneumococcal Vaccine Intervention Project at Grady Health Systems, Grady Memorial Hospital ambulatory care clinic sites, health care providers from Emory University School of Medicine and Grady Memorial Hospital

Intervention Description:

- Individual Education: One-page, low-literacy (below fifth-grade level) educational handout encouraging patients to "ask your doctor about the pneumonia shot" was attached to charts of intervention group patients then distributed to the patient by a clinic technician who instructed the patient to read the handout before seeing the doctor.

Theory: Not mentioned

Resources Required:

- Staff/Volunteers: Clinic staff
- Training: Not mentioned
- Technology: Not mentioned
- Space: Not mentioned
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Low-literacy handouts
- Evaluation: Questionnaire

Evaluation:

- Design: Randomized controlled trial
- Methods and Measures:
 - A brief voluntary questionnaire was administered after clinician visit to assess the rate of patients who discussed immunizations with their health care providers.
 - Immunization rates were documented by chart audit.

Outcomes:

- Short Term Impact: There was a significant increase in discussion of the vaccine in the intervention group compared with the control group. There was a significant increase in pneumococcal vaccines given in the intervention group.
- Long Term Impact: Not measured

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: A simple, low-literacy educational tool increased pneumococcal immunization rates and patient-provider discussions about the vaccine in elderly, low-literate, indigent, minority populations. Educational materials need not be complex, elaborate or high tech to favorably affect outcomes. Through chart review, health care personnel can communicate the need for immunizations with physicians or patients. However, the message should also be reinforced through dialogue between the physician and an empowered patient who might be interested in other preventive services as well.

Citation(s):

Jacobson, T.A., et al., Use of a low-literacy patient education tool to enhance pneumococcal immunization rates. A randomized controlled trial. *Jama*, 1999. 282(7): p. 646-50.