

2009 Bull's-Eye Award Nomination: Hawaii Department of Health
Stop Flu at School Program

Background Description

In the 2007-2008 Flu Season, the Hawai'i Department of Health (HDOH) successfully initiated and implemented the first statewide school-based influenza vaccination program, Stop Flu at School, through which free seasonal influenza vaccination was offered to children in grades K-8 at school-based clinics. With the strong support and collaboration of multiple public and private partners, this program was continued in the 2008-2009 flu season in over 330 school settings. As a result, over 60,000 of Hawai'i schoolchildren and 9,300 school faculty and staff were vaccinated in a school-based clinic setting during each flu season (2007-2008 and 2008-2009). All schoolchildren in grades K-8 and faculty and staff in participating Hawai'i public and private schools were offered the choice of either trivalent inactivated influenza vaccine (TIV) or live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV). Participation (children and schools) in the Stop Flu at School Programs (2007-2008 and 2008-2009) was voluntary. In each of the previous two flu seasons, overall school participation statewide was 90%, and vaccination uptake among children (age 5-13 years) in Hawai'i was approximately 44%. HDOH remains ambitious in continuing its efforts through the Stop Flu at School Program for a third consecutive seasonal influenza season by offering free influenza vaccination through school-based clinics in the upcoming 2009-2010 flu season to begin October 13 through November 25, 2009.

Annual Budget

The School Flu Program 2008-2009 cost was approximately \$1.8 million. Sources of funding include Immunization Grant funds, a local health insurance plan, vaccine manufacturers, and Public Health Emergency Preparedness funds.

Below are the categories:

- Vaccine - \$1.29 million Medical Supplies - \$64K
- Supplies – \$18K Print Materials - \$69K
- Data Entry - \$23K Nursing Services - \$234K
- Temp Staff - \$60K Curriculum & Training - \$11K

Public Relations - \$18K Courier - \$6K

Promotion & Incentives - \$5K

Other - \$51K (this included translations, disposal of medical waste, school awards, and neighbor island travel to receive awards)

Justification

Unlike other vaccination projects, the School Flu Program is a year round process that intensifies closer to implementation in the month of October, and has involved regularly scheduled internal team meetings, initially engaging schools for support of influenza vaccination at their respective schools, meetings with the medical community, influenza vaccine ordering, annual training of clinic staff, initially creating and annually enhancing consent forms for two presentations of influenza vaccine, development of educational materials targeted for schools and parents, creating and maintaining a HDOH School Flu website, and recently establishing an on-line School Flu vaccination clinic training module.

Hawai'i's rationale for initially pursuing statewide school-based influenza vaccinations included:

1. We wanted to be better prepared for possible mass vaccinations of school children during an influenza pandemic.
2. We have had evidence of substantial seasonal influenza attack rates in children including reports of school outbreaks.
3. CDC recommendations support targeting this age group for influenza vaccination.

Through the Stop Flu at School Program, HDOH demonstrates a sustainable, feasible and effective statewide school-based mass immunization model that can be utilized and replicated to efficiently provide seasonal influenza vaccine annually as recommended by the ACIP for the prevention and control of influenza among this population of school-age children in the school setting.

The Stop Flu at School program has strived to achieve the following goals:

Goal 1: To achieve a 95% School Flu Program participation rate of all public and private schools grades K-8 grades (5-13 years).

The School Flu Program has achieved a 90% participation rate for two consecutive years.

Goal 2: To achieve a 50% influenza vaccination uptake of all Hawai'i schoolchildren grades K-8 (ages 5-13 years) in participating School Flu Program schools.

The School Flu Program has achieved an influenza vaccination uptake of 44% of all schoolchildren in grades K-8 (ages 5-13 years) in participating schools.

Some of the identified areas highlighted for School Flu Program evaluation are:

- School Flu vaccination uptake
- Throughput (transit time) of participants in School Flu vaccination clinics
- Impact of School Flu vaccination and school absentee data

The HDOH School Flu Program may serve as a valuable resource to other states interested or compelled to replicate school-located influenza vaccination clinics, especially as we all face the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic and vaccinating schoolchildren. Partnering with schools and school systems, and internal and external stakeholders has been critical to the continued success of the School Flu Program and vital to improving the Department of Health's readiness for and response to the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic.

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