



NOVEMBER 2014

# Influenza News



The National Influenza Vaccination Disparities Partnership (NIVDP) is comprised of multi-sector partners who work to promote flu vaccination among underserved populations including African Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians/Alaska Natives. The partnership and this newsletter are supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

## Health departments increase reach of NIVW efforts

In this issue, we highlight how health departments throughout the United States are connecting with members of the NIVDP to promote flu vaccination. So far for the 2014-2015 season, over 30 local and state health departments have collaborated with partners of the NIVDP during National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW) and beyond.

- The Chicago Health Department is ramping up for *Vaccinate Illinois Week* to reach underserved communities with high profile media events;
- The Jefferson County Health Department in Alabama is promoting collaboration to address the needs of the underserved;
- The New York State Health Department is attending regional meetings to discuss the importance of vaccination and the health department's flu mask regulation which has helped to increase vaccination rates among health care professionals by 30% in less than two years; and
- The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment is collaborating with the Indian Health Services and local Urban Indian-serving organizations in Denver to promote "good health and good life."

## SPOTLIGHT ON PARTNERS

### CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PROMOTES VACCINATE ILLINOIS WEEK DURING NIVW



Dr. Julie Morita, Chief Medical Officer for the Chicago Department of Public Health

Dr. Julie Morita, Chief Medical Officer for the Chicago Department of Public Health, is working closely with long-time NIVDP partner The Chicago Area Immunization Coalition to organize flu vaccination clinics with Walgreens throughout the city. The outreach efforts are targeting under-resourced communities.

Major promotional efforts include proclamations from Illinois Governor, Pat Quinn, and Chicago Mayor, Rahm Emanuel. It also includes a media tour and City of Chicago bus wraps, in addition to an LED projection of *Vaccinate Illinois*

*Week*. At least 3,000 residents of Chicago are anticipated to be vaccinated. "We are urging every Chicagoan to ask their health care provider about flu vaccine availability," declared Dr. Morita, who was the former Director of the Immunization Program at CDPH.

### JEFFERSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT IN ALABAMA ENCOURAGES COLLABORATION



Dr. Mark Wilson, Public Health Officer for the Jefferson County Health Department in Alabama

Dr. Mark Wilson, Public Health Officer for the Jefferson County Alabama Department of Health, has been working closely with Dr. Max Michael, Dean of the University of Alabama at Birmingham's School of Public Health and NIVDP partner Councilwoman, Sheila Tyson, to promote flu vaccination among underserved communities. In addition, NIVDP partner, Friends of West End, is currently planning activities to take place December 7th and 9th, 2014 at New Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church, Church of the Reconciler, and Princeton Towers Senior Living Center.

Dr. Wilson recognizes that improved health outcomes for the most vulnerable cannot occur through the health department's efforts alone. Early in his career as a hospital administrator, he worked collaboratively with many grassroots groups to address the needs of indigenous populations. Dr. Wilson emphasizes, that "collaboration makes a difference."

## NEW YORK STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENT TOUTS SUCCESS OF FLU MASK REGULATION

The New York State Health Department has attended immunization regional coalition meetings with health care professionals, advocates, and NIVDP partners to discuss flu vaccination and the impact of the flu mask regulation that went into effect as policy for the state in July 2013.

At the Annual Western New York Adult Immunization Coalition Meeting on November 3, 2014, Dr. Elizabeth Rausch-Phung, Medical Director at the Bureau of Immunization for the New York Health Department, spoke on the flu mask regulation to prevent flu transmission by health care and residential facility and agency personnel. She reported that the policy requires personnel who are not vaccinated against the flu to wear a mask during the flu season. "We are pleased with the impact of the regulation because 88% of health care personnel were vaccinated last year. This is a dramatic shift," declared Dr. Raush-Phung. "The impact translates to a 30% increase in the number of personnel who are vaccinated in New York. The State Health Department is solidly committed to promoting protection against the flu," she concluded. For more information on the regulation and all the proceedings from the coalition meeting, please visit: <http://on.ny.gov/1qAlHq1>.



Dr. Elizabeth Rausch-Phung,  
Medical Director of the  
Bureau of Immunization, New  
York Department of Health

## A COLORADO PARTNERSHIP COMES TOGETHER TO REACH URBAN AMERICAN INDIANS DURING NIVW

A broad and diverse group of local, city and state partners are working collaboratively to provide flu vaccines to the underserved urban American Indian population in Denver. The group includes NIVDP partners, the Denver Indian Center, Inc. (DICI), the Denver Indian Health and Family Services (DIHFS), the Native American Cancer Research Corporation (NACRC) and the Denver Indian Family Resource Center (DIFRC). These organizations are coordinating an upcoming event with Colorado's Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), Mayor Michael Hancock, Councilman Paul Lopez, the Denver American Indian Commission, Walgreens, and other local American Indian/Alaska Native organizations to link with their efforts for an upcoming NIVW event. The event will be held on December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

Bellerena Billie Begaii, Project Manager at DICI, highlighted the importance of multi-sector partnerships and the CDC National Influenza Vaccination Disparities Partnership, saying "we are the keepers of the circle of life, and good health means good life. These partners have a responsibility to honor ourselves and the people by walking in good health."



Left to right: Madonna Rodger, Resource & Referral Specialist, DIFRC; Eugenia Ashley, Medical Assistant, DIHFS; Lynnsay Trefren, RN, MSN, Immunization Branch Chief, CDPHE; and Bellerena Billie Begaii, Project Manager, Community Health, DICI

Share your ideas, photos, and events with us. We will feature them in upcoming issues of InFLUential News.

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