

Effectiveness of Influenza Vaccination Screening: A Quality Improvement Project to Increase Inpatient Vaccination Rates among Veterans

Nature and Scope of the Project: Globally, approximately 1 billion diagnosed cases of influenza occur yearly, with 290,000 to 650,000 of these cases resulting in death (World Health Organization, 2019). Healthy People 2030 included increasing the overall number of Americans who receive an annual influenza vaccine as an objective, with a goal percentage of 70% (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2022). Although yearly vaccination rates have been trending upward, the overall percentage of Americans who receive the influenza vaccine each year remains low, especially among hospitalized individuals (Joint Commission, 2018). The objective of this project was to increase seasonal influenza vaccination rates among admitted veterans through improvements in nursing staff education, vaccination eligibility screening, and related nursing documentation.

Project Implementation: The health program implemented was a nursing staff education program focused on inpatient influenza vaccination screening, vaccine administration, and related nursing documentation. This education program was presented to staff during in-service sessions, with pre- and post-tests completed to assess participant knowledge of the healthcare system's inpatient influenza vaccination policy. Throughout the 90-day project period, routine chart auditing was completed to monitor completed influenza vaccination eligibility screenings, vaccination rates, and related nursing documentation for admitted veterans.

Outcomes: The result of a paired *t*-test comparing pre- and post-test scores was significant based on an alpha value of .05, $t(34) = -6.91, p < .001$, indicating that the mean post-test score was significantly higher than the mean pre-test score and that staff knowledge increased after education program implementation. Comparing chart auditing data from the 2020-2021 flu

season to data collected during the clinical project period, the percentages of admitted veterans screened for eligibility to receive the seasonal influenza vaccine, influenza vaccines ordered and administered, and properly documented vaccination encounters all increased notably, indicating improved staff adherence to the healthcare system's inpatient influenza vaccination policy.

Recommendations: Annual nursing staff education on the healthcare system's inpatient influenza vaccination policy at the beginning of each flu season is recommended to increase eligibility screening opportunities, vaccination rates, and related documentation among admitted veterans.