

DOCUMENT 1

Ottawa Public Health Annual Influenza Immunization Communication Plan

Campaign goals and key messages

Goals:

- To inform and influence target audiences to get the seasonal influenza vaccine through Ottawa Public Health (OPH) clinics or health care providers
- To encourage health care providers, such as physicians and long-term care staff, to promote the influenza vaccine to their patients/residents

Key messages for residents:

- The influenza vaccine is safe, free and the most effective way to protect yourself and your loved ones from the seasonal flu.
- It is important to remember that anyone can get the flu. For you, it can mean being ill for days, missing work or school or even spending time in the hospital. You can spread the virus to your kids, your family, or vulnerable members of our community.
- Talk to your health care provider or come to a free Ottawa Public Health clinic before December 15. Visit ottawa.ca/flu for more information.

Key messages for health care providers:

- Ottawa Public Health is depending on you to promote the influenza vaccine to your patients, especially those with chronic conditions.
- Illness due to influenza causes stress on our health care system and puts our most vulnerable at risk.

Strategic approach

Scale and communications mix

The seasonal influenza immunization campaign is one of the most high-profile annual initiatives for Ottawa Public Health, and the communications strategy reflects this. Consistent with previous years, the communications mix will include both earned and paid media.

Over the past three years, ottawa.ca has been steadily increasing as the main source of information that residents turn to for vaccination information (from 33 per cent in 2004-2005, to 37 per cent in 2006-2007, to 47 per cent in 2010). Therefore,

there will be an emphasis on ensuring relevant web content is accessible at ottawa.ca/flu as early as possible in the campaign.

According to 2010 clinic evaluations, almost 30 per cent of clients became aware of the OPH clinics through daily or community newspaper coverage or advertising. The traditional targeted clinic list advertisements will be supplemented by additional advertisements that will use strong influencing messages to encourage residents to get the influenza vaccine. Recognizing that more residents are seeking information online in increasing numbers, there will be less full page clinic listing advertisements in daily newspapers. This year, there will be posters and information cards printed.

New approaches

OPH recognizes the valuable role that health care providers play in recommending the influenza vaccine to their patients. Emphasis will be placed on giving health care providers the tools they need to promote the influenza vaccine.

Roll-out

In September, a number of pre-publicity communications will be launched to health care providers as well as key stakeholders. In mid-October, public communications and advertising will roll-out to promote the influenza vaccine at OPH clinics and through health care providers.