

# **CDC Influenza Awareness Campaign Media Relations Toolkit**

**Created by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
November 2011**

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## **About the Campaign**

Each year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) invests in a national awareness campaign to educate the general population about the importance of influenza vaccination. As a critical public health issue, it is CDC's mandate to inform at-risk populations about the importance of vaccination and provide them with useful information about where to get vaccinated.

Throughout the fall and winter months, CDC promotes this campaign nationally through print and Internet ads, magazine articles, TV and radio public service announcements, personal testimony videos featuring parents who have been greatly affected by influenza, radio interviews, bites and b-roll packages, special events, and collaboration with partners. One cornerstone of the campaign is National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW), December 4 through December 10, 2011. NIVW is intended to raise awareness about the importance of flu vaccination and encourage vaccination through December, January and beyond. CDC recommends that partners use this designated week to promote vaccination to their constituents, members, and employees through their various communications channels as well as host free flu clinics that will include the public as much as possible. In past years, NIVW included theme days to reach specific audiences and promote flu vaccination among these groups. NIVW 2011 will not include theme days in order to focus efforts on the universal flu vaccination recommendation. Though everyone 6 months of age and older is now recommended to get vaccinated, tailored messaging and materials for specific populations will still be available during NIVW.

## **Key Considerations for 2011-12 Campaign**

While there are a number of factors about seasonal influenza that are beyond CDC's control, such as when influenza disease will surface, how severe the season will be, which groups it will hit hardest, and how much vaccine will be available, the following key considerations help guide CDC's planning for the 2011-12 influenza season.

## **Key Messages**

- CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses
- Even though the vaccine composition is still the same, everyone needs to get vaccinated with this season's vaccine because immunity from last season's vaccine will have declined.
- People at high risk of serious flu complications include young children, pregnant women, people with chronic health conditions like asthma, diabetes, or heart and lung disease and people 65 years and older.
- Children 6 months through 8 years of age who did not receive at least one dose of the 2010-2011 vaccine, or for whom it is not certain whether 2010-2011 vaccine was

received, should receive 2 doses of the 2011-2012 seasonal vaccine, administered at least 4 weeks apart.

- There are two types of vaccines:
  - The “flu shot” — an inactivated vaccine (containing killed virus) that is given with a needle, usually in the arm.

There are three different flu shots available:

    - a regular flu shot approved for people ages 6 months and older
    - a high-dose flu shot approved for people 65 and older, and
    - the new intradermal flu shot approved for people 18 through 64 years of age.

The age indications for the different flu shots vary, but all may be given to people with chronic medical conditions.
  - The nasal-spray flu vaccine — a vaccine made with live, weakened flu viruses that is given as a nasal spray (sometimes called LAIV for “Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine”). The viruses in the nasal spray vaccine do not cause the flu. LAIV is approved for use in most healthy\* people 2 through 49 years of age who are not pregnant. (See <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/nasalspray.htm> for a complete list of those who can and cannot receive the nasal spray flu vaccine.)
- Additional information and/or recommendations can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6033a3.htm>

### **Using Media to Support the Campaign**

To achieve the goals of this campaign, CDC relies heavily on its network of partner organizations to promote its messages and activate communities to get vaccinated. One way in which partners can help support this effort is by working with their local media to help inform the public about the serious complications of the flu and the importance of vaccination. We encourage partners to reach out to local media with powerful information and “pitch” them to cover the issue in newspapers, television and radio programs, websites, magazines, and other outlets.

This toolkit is intended to help CDC partners expand and enhance their abilities to educate their communities on this issue through media outreach. Designed as a resource for media novices and experts alike, this toolkit offers a variety of tools, proven resources, models, and templates to help you reach out to your local media.

Outlined within this document are the five critical steps to help you develop a media strategy and prepare for the “pitch.”

- Step 1: Developing Key Messages
- Step 2: Developing Press Materials
- Step 3: Preparing for Outreach
- Step 4: Training your Spokespeople
- Step 5: Pitching the Media

# 1

## Developing Key Messages

Before reaching out to the media, it is important to articulate who your audiences are and what you want them to know or do. In every awareness campaign key messages are developed in the initial stages to ensure consistency and accuracy in communications throughout campaign activities.

Each year, CDC develops key messages for its annual National Influenza Vaccination Awareness Campaign. To ensure consistency across the United States, we encourage CDC partners to use CDC's key messages to inform their materials (i.e., press releases, public service announcements, speeches, articles, locally produced PSAs, interviews with reporters, etc.).

Below is a sample of key messages from CDC. Please contact [fluinbox@cdc.gov](mailto:fluinbox@cdc.gov) to request CDC's Influenza Key Messages document in English or Spanish.

### Sample CDC Key Messages

1. Influenza (the flu) is a serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes even death. Anyone can get sick from the flu.
2. While flu can make anyone sick, certain people are at greater risk for serious complications from the flu, causing hospitalization or even death, such as:
  - a. older people
  - b. young children
  - c. people with chronic lung disease (such as asthma and COPD), diabetes (type 1 and 2), heart disease, neurologic conditions, and certain other long-term health conditions, and
  - d. pregnant women
3. Flu seasons are unpredictable and can be severe. Studies going back 30 years to 1976 show that seasonal flu-related deaths have ranged from about 3,000 people to 49,000 people.
4. Protect your family from the flu by getting yourself vaccinated. A flu vaccine reduces your risk of illness, hospitalization, or even death and can prevent you from spreading the virus to your loved ones.
5. Over the years, hundreds of millions of people in the U.S. have safely received seasonal flu vaccines.

*For more information on CDC's key messages, please see Appendix A.*

## 2

# Developing Press Materials

When you are conducting media outreach, it is important that you have materials to provide reporters as a resource to help them write their articles. Outlined below are common and effective materials used in working with the media. Please note that CDC has many of these products already available for partners to use. To access CDC press materials, please contact [cdcinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:cdcinfo@cdc.gov) or 1-800-CDC-INFO

### Press/News Releases

A press release is a one-page description of your news or event designed to inform media of high-level information—the “who,” “what,” where,” “when,” “why,” and “how.” A press release should include the partner’s contact information, a captivating headline, and a quote from your organization’s president or spokesperson and should only include essential information about your issue or event. Other tips for writing a press release include:

- Ensure that your press release is only one page.
- Describe the main news in the first paragraph.
- Check your facts two or three times.
- Type “FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE” at the top of the page in the left margin and “# # #” centered at the bottom of the release.

*For more information on writing press releases, see Appendix B.*

### Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

PSAs are non-commercial, unpaid radio and television messages used to promote information intended for the public good. Before pitching a PSA to the local radio or television stations, ask how long, in number of words and in time, your PSA can be, as different stations tend to prefer different lengths depending on their other advertising constraints. There are generally four different lengths: 15 seconds (40 words), 20 seconds (50 words), 30 seconds (75 words), and 60 seconds (150 words).

A selection of radio and television PSAs are available to partners to pitch to their local media outlets and/or post on their websites. The PSAs currently available target a variety of audiences, including the general public and minority populations. The PSAs are available in 15-, 30-, and 60-second spots and some are available open-ended (or untagged) so that you can tailor them to your group’s needs. For example, you could add local information such as a flu clinic date and time or a mention of your organization and contact information.

Available PSAs can be viewed at: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/media.htm>

### TV PSAs:

- “Why Flu Vaccination Matters: Personal Stories of Families Affected by Flu” (English- :60, 6:47)
- “I never get the flu” (English- :30, :60)
- “Flu Ends with U” (English/Spanish- :30, :60,)
- Everyone Needs a Flu Vaccine (English/Spanish- :30, :60)
- “Who Needs a Flu Vaccine (English/ Spanish; :15, :30)

### Radio PSAs:

- “¿Vacuna contra la influenza para los chicos grandes?” (:30, :60)
- “Dinner Party” (English/Spanish- :30, :60)
- “Flu Vaccine for Big Kids?” (English- :30, :60)
- “I never get the flu” (English- :30, :60)
- “Yo me vacuno. La historia de un amor.” (Spanish- 3 episodes)

For more tips on distributing PSAs, see Appendix C.

### Letters to the Editor or Op-Eds

Letters to the editor are letters that can be written by any reader of the publication in response to an issue that has been covered in the publication or is of interest to its readers. Letters to the editor provide a wide public forum that can be used to your advantage, before and after your event. Newspapers are most likely to publish a letter to the editor if it addresses an article that has been published in the paper. When creating your letter, make sure to note the article you are referring to in your letter.

Op-ed is the abbreviation for “opposite editorial” because these opinionated pieces are usually placed on the page opposite the editorial page. While an editorial is written by the news organization that expresses the opinion of the editor, editorial board, or publisher; an op-ed represents the opinion of an individual contributor, such as an “expert,” public official, or anyone who represents an organization.

For both letters to the editor and op-eds, contact your local newspapers to find out about any word count limits or deadlines. All letters must be signed and include an address.

### Matte Articles

Matte articles, also known as drop-in articles, repro-proofs, or camera-ready news, are an effective, cost-efficient way to spread information on influenza vaccination, as well as to share your success stories. A matte article is a type of news article that is written for direct insertion in community and weekly newspapers. Similar to a feature story in content, your matte article should focus on “soft” news and have a longer shelf life than more time-sensitive news releases.

**Children's Health**  
For Kids, The Flu Is More Than A Runny Nose

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10

Healthy Ideas  
Children and anyone who have risk or care for them should be vaccinated against the flu every year. To learn who or what to get vaccinated, call your doctor or the local health department. For more information, call 1-800-CDC-2747 or visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

**Tips for creating effective matte articles:**

- Keep articles to one page.
- Offer solutions.
- Include a photo or graphic.
- Link your article to the local audience.

Before sending your article, find out what format the publications prefer. Some prefer to receive camera-ready materials on slick paper, while others prefer electronic layouts, usually in PDF format. Still others prefer to lay out the articles themselves, so they will want to receive articles as Word documents.

For an example of a matte article for use during flu season, see Appendix D.

### Events Calendar

Many newspapers and radio and TV stations have community calendars or bulletin boards that feature listings of local events. By assembling a local calendar of vaccination events and activities, you can provide a service to the media and save them the time of collecting the information. Be sure to include National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW) on your calendar lists.

**News Conference or Special Events**

When planning an event such as a community flu clinic, send a media advisory to the local media at least 3 days prior to the event as well as the day of the event to entice press attendance and coverage. Call reporters and news desks the morning of the event as a reminder and to confirm attendance.

If press representatives have confirmed their attendance, set up a media hospitality area where reporters can sign in and gather media materials such as an event agenda, a fact sheet or bio of the special guest speaker(s). Make sure you know when and where your spokespeople will be available.

*Please see Appendix E for a checklist for conducting a news conference and Appendix F for information on writing a media advisory.*



# 3

## Preparing for Outreach

### Compile Media Lists

Preparing for outreach begins with developing media lists. Media lists help you organize local editors', reporters' and producers' names, outlets, and contact information (i.e., TV, radio, print). Media lists should be detailed and include journalists' beats or topics they cover, submission deadlines, conversation notes, contact information, and best times to call. Use media lists to keep track of public service directors, program producers, and the names of health reporters in your area.

Developing media lists requires research. You can compile information by calling local newsrooms, keeping track of journalists that have contacted your organization in the past, or by tracking the media that covers health-related stories. There are also news sources that offer (for a fee) access to databases of specific media contacts.

	A	B	C	D
1	Print			
2	Newspapers			
3	First	Last	Title	Outlet
4	Carol J.	Williams	Editor	Los Angeles Times
5	Robyn	Dixon	Foreign Bureau	Los Angeles Times
6	Henry	Chu	Correspondent	Los Angeles Times
7	Maggie	Farley	Correspondent	Los Angeles Times
8	Tracy	Wilkinson	Correspondent	Los Angeles Times
9	Barbara	Demick	Correspondent	Los Angeles Times
10	Sonni	Efron	Correspondent	Los Angeles Times-Washing
11	Tom	Hamburger	Correspondent	Los Angeles Times-Washing
12	Melissa	Healy	Correspondent	Los Angeles Times-Washing
13	Doyle	McManus	Bureau Chief & Writer	Los Angeles Times-Washing
14	Peter	Wallsten	Correspondent	Los Angeles Times-Washing
15	Ashley	Dunn	Editor	Los Angeles Times
16	Jia-Rui	Chong	Reporter	Los Angeles Times
17	Thomas H.	Maugh II	Reporter	Los Angeles Times
18	Alan	Zarembo	Reporter	Los Angeles Times
19	Tami	Dennis	Editor	Los Angeles Times
20	Jeannine	Stein	Staff Writer	Los Angeles Times
21	Cheryl	Clark	Staff Writer	San Diego Union-Tribune
22	Carla	Marinucci	Staff Writer	San Francisco Chronicle
23	Joan	Ryan	Columnist	San Francisco Chronicle
24	Russell	Sabin	Medical Writer	San Francisco Chronicle

Be creative about where you pitch your news. Examples of non-traditional media outlets may include:

- Medical center or clinic newsletters
- Supermarket or pharmacy news handouts
- Faith-based organization publications
- Ethnic media newspapers or community newsletters
- Public health journals
- Business journals
- PTA/PTO newsletters or school newspapers
- E-blasts or fax blasts to your mailing list
- Bilingual publications

### Establish Relationships

Once you establish your media lists, introduce yourself with a phone call or a get-to-know-you meeting to present your organization as a resource on influenza or vaccination. Remember to have your media materials readily available to send as follow-up information.

### Maintain Relationships

Once you have made contact, maintaining relationships with the media should be a priority. The following tips will help you to maintain good relations with the media.

- Be responsive and provide follow-up information as soon as possible.
- Be mindful of reporter's deadlines. Don't call or email when reporters are rushed.
- Know your reporter's beat or area of coverage and send only relevant news.
- Offer background information when a related news story breaks.
- When your story is covered, follow up with that reporter and thank them for attending.

# 4

## Training Your Spokespeople

### Identifying a Spokesperson

For many of the materials and activities mentioned throughout this toolkit, you will need to identify a spokesperson who will serve as the “voice” to carry the messages. This can be a health officer, a subject matter expert, or a public information officer. A spokesperson should have a healthy balance of technical expertise and an engaging personality.

### Preparing a Spokesperson

Regardless of who serves as your media spokesperson, he or she should be prepared. Prior to an interview or press event, prepare your spokesperson by practicing questions and answers, reviewing key messages, and giving him or her background information on the journalists conducting the interview. You can also create a list of potential questions that you expect to be asked along with sample responses. For example, a common question may include debunking common “myths” about influenza and the flu vaccine (e.g., the vaccine can give you the flu; you must get a flu vaccine before November for it to be effective; flu is only a danger for older people and small children).

The following tips might help provide guidance to your spokesperson:

- Speak in layman’s terms and avoid jargon so that all audiences can understand.
- Be courteous and patient when answering (or re-answering) questions.
- Never be too casual in your conversation. There is no such thing as “off the record.”
- Discuss what you know, not what you think.
- If you tell a reporter you’ll get back to him or her with information, remember to do so, and provide it as soon as possible.
- Do not express personal opinions.
- Say if you are confused by a question. If you say something that is wrong, or misstate a fact, just admit your error and make sure the correct information is conveyed in the end.

### Staying “On Message”

Once goals and messages have been established, the challenge becomes one of delivery and ensuring that messages are heard and goals are met. Take every opportunity in an interview to reiterate your key messages. Another way to stay on message is to exercise some control over the conversation you are having, be it during an interview, press conference, or when taking questions from an audience. Do not allow the conversation to go down paths that are not pertinent to your goals or message—no matter how persistent the questioner might be in pursuing a line of inquiry. For example, if you are trying to promote a vaccination clinic at the local hospital, do not allow yourself to get bogged down by questions related to issues you aren’t comfortable answering such as national vaccine supply.

*For more guidance on preparing your spokespeople, see Appendix G for tips on writing speeches and presentations, and Appendix H for tips on public speaking.*

# 5

## Pitching the Media

### “Pitching” the Media

#### **Getting reporters and the local media interested in influenza vaccination and National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW).**

NIVW is an important part of increasing public awareness about seasonal flu and the importance of vaccination. Remember that you have a compelling story to tell—one that affects the health and well-being of the entire community. If you develop a strong relationship with a reporter, you will become a resource for influenza-related issues when that reporter does a related story in the future. Be sure to record your activities/events on CDC’s NIVW page:

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/NIVW/activities.htm> and encourage others to take the flu vaccination pledge, found on: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/nivw/pledge/>

There are several ways to pitch the media to cover your issue. Depending on the type of media, you can “pitch” (request) articles, PSAs, calendar items on NIVW, letters to the editor, or op-eds. Your “pitch” can focus on a vaccination drive, drive-through clinic, or other community event.

Timing is important. When sending out information prior to your event, do not send it too early, or it may be discarded or “filed.” On the other hand, do not send information so late that it becomes “old news.” Consider whether the publication is daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly. For daily papers, send information 4-5 days prior. For weekly publications, send information 8-10 days in advance. Contact monthly or quarterly publications to find out their deadlines.

#### **Be Respectful and Prepared**

Be cognizant that reporters get hundreds of phone calls, emails, faxes and requests each day all of which compete for their time and coverage. Remember a few helpful tips when reaching out to the media.

- Contact the news desk to find out about specific deadlines before making your pitch.
- Provide the right information to the right reporters; know their topic areas.
- Ask the reporter or editor how he or she likes to receive information (e.g., by email or fax).
- If a reporter doesn’t call you back right away, don’t take it personally.
- Be responsive if a reporter calls you for information.
- Provide information in the appropriate formats. If it’s a print publication, provide documents. For TV, provide a visual. If it’s radio, provide an interview.
- Don’t offer a spokesperson unless you have one ready and prepared.
- Be prepared with information about the issue and/or event(s).
- Thank the media when they cover your story.

#### **Be Creative**

Being creative with your story will help your news stand out from competing news. Below are some helpful tips to help your news stand out.

- Provide a unique angle with supporting data (e.g., the number of local people who remain unvaccinated each year and why, the importance of employers encouraging their workers to get vaccinated to reduce absenteeism, common myths, etc.).
- Tie NIVW activities and your messages to a larger local story.
- Events, such as health fairs or clinics, are good topics for local media because they are visual, and provide opportunities for interviews.

- If one reporter says “no,” move on to the next. A medical/science reporter may not be interested in covering your event, but a lifestyle reporter or community affairs reporter might want to highlight the event. A political reporter may be interested in covering your activities as an example of government in action, and an education reporter might want to focus on the importance of vaccinating school-aged children.
- Be quotable to bring your story to life.
- Write a compelling or provocative subject line to grab a journalist’s attention. Keep in mind that the subject line is the first thing reporters and editors see.

### **Conclusion**

Now that you have the tools, you can begin to develop your own media outreach plans in support of CDC’s National Influenza Awareness Campaign. The templates and ideas presented here are designed to be adaptable for your individual organization’s use. Use these media components wisely so that they will represent your organization, promote the goals of this campaign in a compelling way, and help build visibility for your activities.

Additional resources for your use are listed in Appendix I.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: CDC Influenza Awareness Campaign Key Messages and Talking Points

The key messages listed below were developed in support of the 2011-2012 CDC Influenza Vaccination Awareness Campaign. Use these messages as written or tailor them as appropriate to make them more relevant and supportive of your media outreach work. To receive the complete 2011-12 flu key messages document in English or Spanish, email [fluinbox@cdc.gov](mailto:fluinbox@cdc.gov).

### General statements for use during NIVW:

- CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses.
- While there are many different flu viruses, the flu vaccine protects against the three viruses that research suggests will be most common this season.
- The 2011-2012 flu vaccine will protect against an influenza A (H3N2) virus, an influenza B virus and the H1N1 virus that emerged in 2009 and caused a pandemic.
- Even though the vaccine composition is still the same, everyone needs to get vaccinated with this season's vaccine because immunity from last season's vaccine will have declined.
- Everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine as soon as the 2011-2012 vaccines are available.
- While the flu can make anyone sick, certain people are at greater risk for serious complications from the flu, causing hospitalization or even death, including:
  - a) adults 50 years of age and older
  - b) children younger than 5, but especially younger than 2 years old
  - c) people with chronic lung disease (such as asthma and COPD), diabetes (type 1 and 2), heart disease, neurologic conditions, and certain other long-term medical conditions,
  - d) those who are morbidly obese (BMI of 40 or greater)
  - e) pregnant women and women within the first two weeks after delivery (2 weeks post-partum)
  - f) other groups at increased risk of flu complications are listed at [http://www.cdc.gov/flu/flu\\_vaccine\\_updates.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/flu_vaccine_updates.htm)
- Flu seasons are unpredictable. The severity of influenza seasons can differ substantially from year to year. Over a period of 30 years, between 1976 and 2006, estimates of yearly flu-associated deaths in the United States range from a low of about 3,000 to a high of about 49,000 people.

- Each year in the United States on average: An estimated 5-20 percent of the population can be infected with the flu, and more than 200,000 people may be hospitalized during a flu season.
- The composition of the flu vaccine is reviewed each year. If needed, the vaccine is then updated to protect against the three flu viruses that research indicates will be the most common during the upcoming season. New vaccine is manufactured every season.
- Research indicates that the same 3 strains that circulated most during the 2010-11 flu season will continue to be the most prominent 3 strains during the 2011-12 flu season.
- Therefore the strains in the 2011-12 flu vaccine are the same as those included in the 2010-11 flu vaccine.
- The 2011-2012 flu vaccine will protect against an influenza A (H1N1) virus, an influenza A (H3N2) virus and an influenza B virus.
- Vaccination of high risk persons and their close contacts is especially important to reduce the risk of severe flu illness in high risk persons. For a list of high risk people who should get a yearly flu vaccination, visit: [http://www.cdc.gov/flu/flu\\_vaccine\\_updates.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/flu_vaccine_updates.htm)
- Flu vaccines are offered in many locations, including doctor's offices, clinics, health departments, pharmacies and college health centers, as well as by many employers, and even in some schools.
- Even if you don't have a regular doctor or nurse, you can get a flu vaccine somewhere else, like a health department, pharmacy, urgent care clinic, and maybe your school, college health center, or work.
- CDC recommends that influenza vaccination begin as soon as 2011-2012 flu vaccine becomes available and continue throughout the flu season. People should begin getting vaccinated as soon as vaccine becomes available in their community.
- Influenza seasons are unpredictable, and can begin as early as October. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body and provide protection against influenza virus infection.

#### **Flu Vaccine Safety Statements for General Audiences**

- Influenza vaccines have been used in the United States for more than 50 years.
- Hundreds of millions of people have safely received seasonal influenza vaccines.
- Each year, CDC works closely with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), health care providers, state and local health departments, and other partners to ensure the highest safety standards for influenza vaccines. CDC also works closely with the FDA to ensure systems are in place to promptly detect unexpected or unusual patterns of adverse events following vaccination.

- The influenza shot (also called inactivated influenza vaccine) cannot give you influenza because the viruses in it have been inactivated and are not infectious. Most people generally do not experience any side effects from the influenza shot. When side effects do occur, they are usually mild. The most common side effects from the influenza shot are soreness, redness, tenderness or swelling where the shot is given. Low-grade fever, headache and muscle aches also may occur.

## Appendix B: Press/News Release Template

Use the template below to draft your own press release, which should answer, who, what, where, when, why, and how of the event or activity. It also should include a quote from the appropriate person in your organization. The following sample press release includes further explanation of each section.

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**For Immediate Release** – These words should appear in the upper left-hand margin, just under your letterhead. You should capitalize every letter.

CONTACT: Tom Jones

California Department of Health Services

Phone: (916) 555-5555

Fax: (916) 555-5500

**Contact Information** – Skip a line or two after release statement and list the name, title, telephone, and fax numbers of the person with the most information. It is important to give your cell number since reporters often work on deadline and may not be available until after hours.

**[NAME OF YOUR DEPARTMENT] Holds Flu Shot Clinic as Part of National Influenza Vaccination Week  
Local Pharmacy Hosts Fall Festival**

**Headline** – Skip two lines after your contact info and use a boldface type.

**[CITY, State]**—Today, **[NAME OF YOUR DEPARTMENT]** is hosting a **[EVENT]**, which is expected to involve more than **[MINIMUM NUMBER OF EXPECTED PARTICIPANTS]** from **[NAME(S) OF AREA(S)]**. Some of the activities planned for today include **[LOCAL ACTIVITIES]**.

**Subhead** – Fleshes out the headline to further entice the editor.

**[INCLUDE ANY OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION REGARDING YOUR EVENT HERE.]**

"National Influenza Vaccination Week provides an important opportunity for our community to tell people how important it is for people to get an annual flu shot," said **[NAME AND TITLE OF SPOKESPERSON]**. "Getting vaccinated is the single best way for people to protect not only themselves against flu, but their loved ones as well."

**Body** – Double check your release for accuracy and keep it to one page if possible.

For more information about influenza and influenza vaccine visit [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu) and **[INSERT DEPARTMENT/ORGANIZATION WEBSITE, IF APPLICABLE]**.

## Appendix C: Public Service Announcement Tip Sheet

Public service announcements (PSAs) offer you the opportunity to promote flu vaccination and NIVW activities and program to the general public for free.

### **Motivating Public Service Directors and Producers**

Most radio stations have public service directors who decide which PSAs will air. Public service directors are busy people who receive many PSAs every day. They are more likely to use PSAs that they believe are of local interest to their communities, and they often favor issues and causes related to health. Because influenza vaccination is an important issue that affects many families in your community, public service directors will likely find NIVW or flu vaccination PSAs highly appealing.

The following tips will help you get your PSAs placed on radio stations.

### **Know Who Is in Charge**

Radio station public service directors may have various titles, including community affairs director, advertising manager, or general manager. Often, the on-air personalities or the producers decide which PSAs will air. Call the station and ask whom you should contact about placing your PSAs.

### **Write a Letter of Introduction**

Once you have determined whom to contact, send a letter of introduction that includes the following information:

- The importance of seasonal flu vaccination
- Your success stories and how they have made an impact on your community
- Your plans for NIVW or the flu season in general
- A call-to-action—ask the radio station to support your activities by running PSAs.

Remember to keep it local. The people in charge of PSA placement want to know how the issue affects their community.

### **Meet Face to Face**

Follow up your letter by scheduling meetings with the public service directors at the radio stations where you want your PSAs to air. These meetings put a face on the issue and provide an opportunity for you to educate public service directors about issues related to influenza vaccination. It generally takes a few weeks for radio stations to put PSAs on the air, so you should schedule your meetings well in advance of your events or NIVW. Then, ask the radio station to run your PSAs before the event.

### **Say “Thank You”**

Follow up your visits and meetings with thank-you notes. Acknowledge radio stations once they use the PSAs. Send thank-you notes, and let them know you are delighted that they were able to help raise awareness about the importance of seasonal flu vaccination.

### **Use Your Connections**

Perhaps you or someone in your program already knows someone in a management position at a radio station. Take advantage of that connection to encourage your contact to use your PSAs.

### **Approach Radio Stations That Use PSAs**

Not all radio stations use PSAs. So listen to the radio stations in your community and approach those stations that already air PSAs. If you live in a large metropolitan area, it might be challenging to get your PSAs placed on the most popular radio stations. On the other hand, there are probably several less popular radio stations that will be willing to air your PSAs.

### **Seek a Media Partnership**

Often the media, including TV and radio stations, newspapers, and magazines, will sponsor community events. When they do, they actively promote the event by giving PSAs premium placement and even producing PSAs. If a media outlet does agree to a sponsorship, they usually



ask that the organization co-brand the event. For example, they might ask you to name the event “The Channel 4 National Influenza Vaccination Week Flu Clinic.” There is one downside to a media-sponsored event—competing media will not use your PSAs. This downside could be far outweighed by the benefits of gaining premium PSA placement and visibility with the media outlet with which you form the partnership. Weigh your options and assess whether a media partnership makes sense for your event or organization.

### **Reaching Diverse Audiences with PSAs**

The key to placement in ethnic and specialized media is to make all communications meet the needs of that outlet’s target audiences. Share any immunization data and research related to the diverse subgroups that is relevant to their listening audience. For example, if the listening audience is primarily Puerto Rican, convey research findings and include that this was tested among Puerto Ricans.

If you are focusing on Hispanic radio stations, for example, make sure you provide both Spanish and English versions of the PSAs—there has been a growing trend toward Spanish media using both languages. Be sure any correspondence to the media outlet is in Spanish. Although public service directors at Spanish-language radio stations are likely fluent in both English and Spanish, they will appreciate the sincerity of your pitch if it is in Spanish, and the gesture will increase your opportunity for placement. Independently owned Spanish language radio stations at the local level, for example, are more willing to play PSAs if they are culturally relevant. These stations have a vested interest in their communities.

### **Appendix D: Sample Matte Article**

Audience: African Americans  
CDC 2011-2012 Flu Season  
Word Count: 532

#### **Think You’re Not at Risk for the Flu? You Might be Dead Wrong**

Did you know that while the flu can make anyone sick, people with long-term health conditions—such as asthma, diabetes (type 1 and 2) and heart disease—are at greater risk for serious complications from the flu? African Americans are more likely to live with the chronic diseases that are known to increase the risk of flu complications. Serious flu complications can lead to hospitalization and sometimes even death.

The good news is that you can take a simple step to protect yourself and your family from the flu by getting the flu vaccine each year. The bad news is that many African Americans are not doing this.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says a flu vaccine is the first and best way to guard against the flu. CDC recommends that everyone 6 months and older get the flu vaccine every year. “We’ve seen an increase in the number of children getting the flu vaccine,” says Dr. Anne Schuchat, Assistant Surgeon General of the U.S. Public Health Service and CDC’s Director of the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. “However we are concerned that vaccine coverage rates remain low in the United States for adults, particularly in African Americans.”

So why are so few African Americans getting the flu vaccine? Some people may have concerns about vaccine safety. It is important to know, however, that flu vaccines (both the shot and nasal spray) have excellent safety records, and are constantly being monitored. The most common side effects reported after flu vaccination are minor, and are far outweighed by the vaccine’s benefits.

Millions of flu vaccines have been given safely over the years, and vaccine safety remains a priority every single year.

It's also important to know that the flu vaccine cannot give you the flu. Why? Because the flu shot contains killed viruses, and the nasal spray has weakened viruses that cannot cause illness. If you get flu-like symptoms soon after getting vaccinated, it can mean you may have been exposed to the flu before getting vaccinated, or during the two-week period it takes the body to gain protection after vaccination. It might also mean you are sick with another illness that causes symptoms similar to the flu.

Some people may think that because they received the flu vaccine last season, they don't need another one this year. "Even though the vaccine composition is still the same this year, everyone needs to get vaccinated with this season's vaccine because immunity from last season's vaccine will have declined" says Schuchat. "You need to get vaccinated with this season's vaccine to best protect against flu this season. People who do not are risking a possibly long and serious illness, as well as placing their close contacts at risk for the flu."

Remember, the flu can be especially serious for babies, children, pregnant women, people 65 and older and people with certain long-term medical conditions. However, even healthy people can get the flu and should protect themselves by getting the flu vaccine every year.

For more information, talk to your doctor or contact CDC at 1-800-CDC-INFO or <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>.

###

## **Appendix E: Checklist for Conducting a News Conference**

If properly used, a news conference can be a good way to provide media with information on influenza vaccination events, particularly during NIVW. Consider the following items when planning and implementing your press conference.

### **Plan Date, Time, and Location**

- Have you given the media as much advance time as possible?
- Is your event in a location that is easily accessible to the media?

### **Invite Key Media to Attend By Sending Out a Media Advisory**

- Have you made sure the media advisory gives the date, time, and location of the news conference, the subject to be discussed, the names of the people who will be speaking or otherwise participating, names of contact people from whom they can obtain advance (and follow-up) information, and a list of languages in which materials will be provided?
- Have you placed follow-up calls before the conference to remind reporters about the event?

### **Prepare the Room**

- Have you made sure your news conference site includes staging, chairs, a podium, and microphones and checked to ensure all equipment is working properly?
- Do you need a mult box from an audio/visual company for broadcast reporters to plug into to obtain clear sound? Be aware that mult boxes may not be needed in areas with more advanced technology.
- Is your department's name (and logo) clearly visible on the front of your podium, or behind the speaker?
- Do you have a backup plan for possible glitches?
- Prepare the room with video or photography, such as campaign posters on easels or banners hanging overhead.

### **Provide Media Materials**

- Have you prepared media kits including news releases, speaker names and bios, fact sheets, or other materials that might help reporters write their stories?

**Be Prepared**

- Have the main spokespersons rehearsed the key messages developed for the event and are they ready to answer questions?
- Have you made sure your spokespeople know what the most important information is and how to stay focused, even if asked questions that concern other issues?
- Have you developed answers to potentially controversial questions that may be asked, such as concerns about the vaccine’s effectiveness and safety?
- Have you discussed in advance which key points will be presented by each spokesperson?
- Have you designated a moderator prior to the news conference to keep the conference on schedule, established ground rules, and fielded reporters’ questions?
- Have you set a clear end time for the news conference?
- Have you made a Spanish-speaking or other appropriate language spokesperson available at the news conference and have you referenced that in your media materials?

**Be Thorough**

- Have you made sure all questions are answered during the news conference? If a spokesperson does not know the answer to a question, make sure a member of the team finds the answer after the news conference and makes it available to the reporter as soon as possible. If possible, allow spokespeople to be available one-on-one with reporters following the conference to answer questions.
- Have you designated someone to ask questions during the news conference that reporters may not raise?

**Monitor Attendance and Follow Up**

- Have you asked reporters to sign in? This will provide a list of who attended and who did not attend.
- For key media personnel who were not able to attend, have you offered them a phone interview with the spokespersons or sent them a media kit?

**Appendix F: Media Advisory Template**

Use the template below to create your media advisory. The advisory should answer “who,” “what,” “where,” “when,” “why,” and “how” of the event or activity. It also should include contact information for your organization. A media advisory should be sent out before an event and again the day of the event.

**MEDIA ADVISORY FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

CONTACT: Tom Jones  
 California Department of Health Services  
 Phone: (916) 555-5555  
 Fax: (916) 555-5500

**Contact Information** – Skip a line or two after the advisory statement and list the name, title, telephone, and fax numbers of the person with the most information. It is important to give your cell number since reporters often work on deadline and may not be available until after hours.

**[NAME OF YOUR DEPARTMENT] Holds [EVENT] as Part of National Influenza Vaccination Week**

**Headline** – Skip two lines after your contact info and use a boldface type.

**[CITY, State]—[NAME OF YOUR DEPARTMENT]** is hosting a **[EVENT]**, which is expected to involve more than **[MINIMUM NUMBER OF EXPECTED PARTICIPANTS]** from **[NAME(S) OF AREA(S)]**.

**WHO:** **[LIST ANY VIPS AND OTHER ATTENDEES OF NOTE WHO MAY BE OF INTEREST TO THE PRESS. INCLUDE TITLES WHENEVER POSSIBLE.]**

**WHAT:** **[PROVIDE ADDITIONAL DETAILS ABOUT THE EVENT (I.E., WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE SCHEDULED, ETC.)]**

**WHERE:** **[ADDRESS OF THE EVENT LOCATION]**

**WHEN:** **[DATE AND TIME OF THE EVENT]**

**WHY:** National Influenza Vaccination Week provides an important opportunity for our community to tell people how important it is for people to get an annual flu vaccine. Getting vaccinated is the single best way for people to protect not only themselves against flu, but their loved ones as well.

**CONTACT:** **[NAME, PHONE NUMBER(S), FAX AND EMAIL ADDRESS OF CONTACT]**

For more information about influenza and influenza vaccine visit [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu) and **[INSERT DEPARTMENT/ORGANIZATION WEBSITE, IF APPLICABLE]**.

###

## **Appendix G: Speechwriting Tip Sheet**

If you are conducting National Influenza Vaccination Week activities, there is a good chance that someone from your department will deliver your messages through a short speech or presentation. A detailed outline can provide the framework for an organized and compelling speech. The outline should include the topic, purpose, and audience, as well as three main ideas that support the topic and purpose.

A good length for the average speech is 10 to 20 minutes. If you need more time to make your point, do not be afraid to take it. Because your audience cannot go back and review confusing parts of your speech, it is important for you to deliver a clear, organized presentation and repeat your central points. Below is a general speech outline that you might be able to adapt to suit the special needs of your audience.

**I. Introduction**—Tell them what you're going to tell them. This should take 1 to 3 minutes.

- A. Grab your audience's attention
- B. State your topic and purpose
- C. Preview your speech

**II. Body**—Tell them. Illustrate the points that support your theme. This should take 8 to 15 minutes.

- A. State first main idea

- B. State second main idea
- C. State third main idea

**III. Conclusion**—Tell them what you told them. This should take 1 to 2 minutes.

- A. Restate your main ideas
- B. Add a memorable conclusion

After your first draft of the presentation, go back and revise, reword, and rearrange your ideas, as necessary. Refer back to your outline to make sure that items are parallel and logical. Make sure you have sufficient support for each of the statements you have included.

### **Dos and Don'ts of Speechwriting**

#### **Do:**

- Find out everything you can about the group you are speaking to, the venue, and the event.
- Ask how much time you have to give your speech.
- Check to see if they have what you need for visual aids—overhead projector, LCD projector, etc.
- Prepare an outline of your speech before you start to write it.
- Deliver your speech to someone before the event to practice.
- Give facts and figures with references to back them up.
- Have a clear objective in giving the speech (what you want the audience to know and take away from the speech).
- Concentrate on your message(s).
- Visualize yourself giving the speech.

#### **Don't:**

- Use humor unless you are positive about what the reaction will be.
- Assume the audience knows all of the background information about your topic.
- Use jargon or confusing phrases.
- Exaggerate, stretch the truth, or lie.
- Say more than you need to.
- Rely too much on visual aids to tell your message.
- Talk down to the audience.
- Use the same speech for every venue.

### **Appendix H: Public Speaking Tip Sheet**

The best speakers are those who believe in what they are saying and whose sincerity and dedication to their topic are apparent. Before you choose your speakers, consider your audience. What messenger will they best respond to? Would it be physicians or nurses? Older adults? People with chronic health conditions such as asthma or diabetes? Someone from the health department or a respected local community health worker? No matter whom you choose, the speaker needs to convey expertise, experience, interest, and commitment to the importance of influenza vaccination.

These tips can help you prepare your spokespeople to present a confident and compelling speech.

**Content.** Share information about yourself up front. This personalizes you to the audience and makes listeners feel that they know you. This also is the opportunity to share your own experiences with influenza vaccination initiatives.

**Eye Contact.** The only way you will know if your audience is getting the message is through eye contact. Look for eyes and heads nodding with you.

**Facial Expressions.** Your facial expressions can tell the story of how much you care about the issues you are talking about. Allow your passion for the issue to show, as this gives off energy, and energy makes you convincing.

**Gestures.** Some of what people retain from speeches is through body language. Gestures reinforce and highlight your story and give you energy in your delivery.

**Voice.** Try not to speak in a monotone. Avoid “language helpers” such as “ums,” “ahs,” and “you knows.” Never try to camouflage a regional dialect. All you have to do is tell people where you are from and they will expect you to sound the way you do.

**Pauses/Silence.** There are four good times to pause: when you move from one subject to another, when you want the message to sink in, when you want or need to collect your thoughts, and when you receive laughter or applause.

**Avoid Distractions.** Do not fiddle with your hair, shuffle your feet, sway back and forth, jingle change in your pockets, play with your eyeglasses, or otherwise do something that will take away from what you are saying.

**Practice.** Practice, practice, practice. If possible, spend time alone just prior to your speech; take some deep breaths and think about your central theme.

**Being Nervous Is Normal.** Try and “reframe” your fear into excitement and enthusiasm. Remember that you are the expert and people have come to hear you talk about what you know.

**Is Your Presentation Culturally Competent?** When presenting to audiences from different cultural backgrounds, use the following tips from the National Center for Cultural Competence at Georgetown University.

- Consult with people from the community about customs and taboos in speaking and presenting. Do not assume anything about practices and customs. Is it acceptable to look a person in the eye when they are speaking? Is it considered rude to shake hands before someone else introduces you?
- Consider asking someone from that community who can effectively deliver your message to co-present or conduct the entire presentation.
- Think about your message. Is it crafted in a way that is relevant (and not offensive or condescending) to your audience?
- Be open to suggestions, and be willing to adapt and modify your message and presentation style to your audience.

If you have to use an interpreter, keep these points in mind.

- Talk directly to the audience and not the interpreter. Give the presentation as if they speak your language, and try to connect with them.
- Do not use clichés or jargon that might confuse the interpreter or may not be translatable.
- Jokes are seldom funny when translated, and they may be culturally offensive.
- Give the interpreter as much information ahead of time as possible. If you have a copy of the speech, share it even if you know you won’t follow it to the letter.
- Notice the pace and manner of the interpreter. Practice with the individual if possible. Try to adjust your speech to that pace.
- If you want to put in a few words or phrases in the audience’s language, make sure you can pronounce them properly, that you are saying what you mean to say, and that the interpreter knows what you are trying to say beforehand.

## **Appendix I: Additional Resources**

CDC Seasonal Flu website: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>

Main Government Flu Site: <http://www.flu.gov>

Immunization Coalitions Technical Assistance Network website: <http://izta.blogspot.com/>

American Lung Association's Influenza Prevention Program: <http://www.facesofinfluenza.com>

MMWR 2011-12 Influenza Vaccination Recommendations:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6033a3.htm>

Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS) website: <http://vaers.hhs.gov>

World Health Organization Influenza website: <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/en/>

U.S. Food and Drug Administration Influenza Virus Vaccine Safety & Availability website:  
<http://www.fda.gov/BiologicsBloodVaccines/SafetyAvailability/VaccineSafety/UCM110288>