

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

**October 2008**

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

# CDC Influenza Awareness Campaign Media Relations Toolkit

October 2008

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

---

<b><i>About the Campaign</i></b>	2
<b><i>Using Media to Support the Campaign</i></b>	2
Step 1: Developing Key Messages	3
Step 2: Developing Press Materials	4
Step 3: Preparing for Outreach	6
Step 4: Training Your Spokespeople	7
Step 5: Pitching the Media	8
<b><i>Appendices</i></b>	
A: Key Messages and Talking Points	
B: News Release Template	10
C: Public Service Announcement Tip Sheet	17
D: Sample Matte Article	18
E: Checklist for Conducting a News Conference	20
F: Media Advisory Template	21
G: Speechwriting Tip Sheet	23
H: Public Speaking Tip Sheet	24
I: Additional Resources	25

# CDC Influenza Awareness Campaign Media Relations Toolkit

**October 2008**

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

---

## **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 the CDC's mandate to inform at-risk populations about the importance of vaccination and provide them with useful information about where to get vaccinated.

The campaign, launched on September 24, 2008, continues through January 2009. Throughout the fall and winter months, the CDC will be promoting this campaign nationally through print and Internet ads, magazine articles, TV and radio public service announcements, a special video featuring families who have lost or nearly lost children to the flu, radio interviews, bites and b-roll packages, special events, and collaboration with partners. While the campaign itself extends over five months, one cornerstone of the campaign is National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW), December 8 through December 14, 2008. NIVW is intended to raise awareness of the importance of vaccination and that vaccination is available and effective in December, January and beyond, in most years. The 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. The week includes theme days intended to reach specific audiences and promote influenza vaccination among those groups. During NIVW, Tuesday, Dec. 9 is Children's Influenza Vaccination Day; Thursday, Dec. 11 is Senior Vaccination Day; and Friday, Dec. 12 is Health Care Worker Vaccination Day.

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

To achieve the goals of this campaign, the CDC relies heavily on its network of partner organizations to promote its messages and activate communities to get vaccinated. One way 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 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, Web sites, 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, the CDC develops key messages for its annual Influenza Vaccination Awareness Campaign. To ensure consistency across the United States, we encourage CDC partners to use the 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 the CDC. A full list of key messages by target audience and/or topic can be found in Appendix A.

### Sample CDC Key Messages

#### Key messages for the General Public

- Each year in the U.S., an average of 36,000 people die, and more than 200,000 are hospitalized from serious flu-related complications.
- Some people, such as older people, young children, pregnant women, and people with certain health conditions, are at higher risk for serious flu complications.
- The time to get a flu vaccine starts in September and continues into winter through January or later.
- Vaccination is the single best way to protect yourself and the people you love from influenza.

#### Key messages for Healthcare Providers

- All healthcare professionals, as well as those in training for healthcare professions, should be vaccinated annually against influenza.
- The annual supply of influenza vaccine and the timing of its distribution cannot be guaranteed in any year. It is expected that vaccine will become available beginning in September and continue to arrive on a rolling basis through December 2008. A record amount of vaccine is expected to be distributed during the 2008-2009 season.
- Providers should plan accordingly and have plans to continue vaccinating throughout the season as vaccine is distributed. Providers should routinely offer influenza vaccine throughout the influenza season, even after influenza activity has been documented in the community.
- To avoid missed opportunities for vaccination, providers should offer vaccination during routine healthcare visits or during hospitalizations whenever vaccine is available.

*For more information on the 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 the CDC has many of these products already available for partners to use. To access CDC press materials, please contact Curtis Allen at (404) 639-8487 or at [cea6@cdc.gov](mailto:cea6@cdc.gov).

### Press 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 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 Web sites. The PSAs currently available target African American grandparents, Latino families, Latina friends, and mothers of young children. 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: [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu).

*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 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 reference the article you are referring to in your letter.

#### TV PSAs:

English “Why Flu Vaccination Matters: Personal Stories of Families Affected by Flu” (:60, 6:47)

English: “Grandkids” (:15, :30, :60)

Spanish: “Hazlo por ellos” (:30)

English and Spanish: “Stop” (:60, :30)

#### Radio PSAs:

English: “Grandkids” (:30, :60)

Spanish: “Hazlo por ellos” (:30, :60)

English: “Dinner Party” (:30, :60)

Spanish: “La Cena” (:30, :60)

English: “Flu Vaccine for Big Kids?” (:30, :60)

English: “Don’t Let the Flu Ruin Your Holidays” (:15, :30, :60)

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 length restrictions (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 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.



**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 that was developed by CDC 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 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 before the event and again 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 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.

	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 introduce 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. Following are a few tips on maintaining 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.

# 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. Not only should he or she be an expert on the topic but your spokesperson should be engaging, upbeat, and easy to speak with.

### 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 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 can only catch the flu in a cold weather region; 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.
- Do 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 other issues that might be in the news that day, or on speculation about pandemic influenza.

*For more guidance on preparing your spokesperson, 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 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.

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 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 (i.e., 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. 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-age 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 the CDC's 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 well represent your organization, promote the goals of this campaign in a compelling way, and help build visibility for your individual 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 and talking points listed below were developed in support of the 2008-2009 CDC Influenza Awareness Campaign. Use these messages as written or tailor them as appropriate to make them more relevant to and supportive of your media outreach work.

### General

- Each year in the U.S., an average of 36,000 people die, and more than 200,000 are hospitalized from serious flu-related complications.
- The flu is a contagious disease that can cause mild to severe illness and can lead to hospitalization and even death.
- Influenza is contagious and is thought to spread mainly when an infected person coughs or sneezes near others.
- In general, the flu is worse than the common cold, and symptoms such as fever (usually high), body aches, extreme tiredness, and dry cough are more common and intense. However, because flu symptoms can mimic the symptoms of other respiratory illnesses, it can be very difficult to know if a respiratory infection is caused by the flu virus or not. A doctor can tell you for sure.
- Complications of flu can include bacterial pneumonia, dehydration, worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma, or diabetes and other complications. Children, in particular, may get sinus and ear infections.
- Influenza is unpredictable. We do not know when the flu season will begin or how severe it will be.
- Studies have shown that older people, young children, pregnant women and people with certain chronic medical conditions (such as lung and heart disease) are at increased risk of serious complications.
- Vaccination is the first and most important step in protecting yourself and your loved ones against this serious disease.
- While there are many different flu viruses, the flu vaccine protects best against the three main flu strains that research indicates will cause the most illness during the flu season.
- The vaccine can protect you from getting sick from these three viruses or it can make your illness milder if you get a different flu virus.
- Flu vaccine is safe and cannot cause the flu. This has been shown in many scientific studies.
- Because different influenza viruses circulate each year, new flu vaccines must be made to fight these viruses, which is why it is important to get a flu vaccine *every year*.
- The nasal-spray flu vaccine is an option for healthy persons aged 2-49 years who are not pregnant.

- Yearly flu vaccination should begin in September or as soon as vaccine is available and continue throughout the influenza season, into December, January, and beyond. This is because the timing and duration of influenza seasons vary. While influenza outbreaks can happen as early as October, most of the time influenza activity peaks in January or later.
- The closer the “match” between the influenza viruses in the vaccine and those spreading in the community, the more effective the vaccine is likely to be in preventing influenza.
- Influenza vaccine effectiveness (ability to prevent influenza) has been as high as 70-90% in healthy young adults, when the viruses in the vaccine were well matched to circulating flu viruses.
- Medicare Part B covers the flu shot in full.
- People who have a severe allergic reaction to chicken eggs should not get the influenza vaccine before consulting with their physician.
- It takes about 2 weeks for the body to build up immunity to the flu viruses in the vaccine after vaccination.
- Getting vaccinated early is especially important for children younger than 9 years old getting a flu vaccine for the first time. This is because those children need two doses of vaccine given 4 weeks or more apart. The first dose primes the immune system; the second dose provides immune protection. **If your child needs two doses, begin the vaccination process early.**
- To learn more about the influenza and the flu vaccine call toll-free 1-800-CDC-INFO or visit [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu)

### Recommended Groups

- People who should be vaccinated each year include those who are age 50 or older, pregnant women, children aged 6 months through 18 years of age, and adults and children with chronic health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS, or heart or kidney disease, and people living in nursing facilities. These persons are recommended to get vaccinated because they are at higher risk for getting the flu or having flu complications
- Other people who should get vaccinated against the flu are those who care for or live with the following persons: people age 50 or older, pregnant women, children younger than 5 years old, and adults and children with chronic health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS, or heart or kidney disease. Its especially important for family members and caregivers of infants younger than six months old to get vaccinated, because these infants are too young to receive the flu vaccine.
- In addition, health professionals should also get the flu vaccine to protect themselves and their patients.
- All healthcare professionals, as well as those in training for health care professions, should be vaccinated annually against influenza.
- Your patients are counting on you. Protect yourself. Protect your patients. Get your flu vaccine.

- In 2008-2009, there are 261.5 million persons recommended for vaccination – that is about 84.5% of the US population.

### **Children and the Flu**

- It is estimated that an average of 20,000 children younger than 5 years old are hospitalized due to flu in the United States.
- Children should get a flu vaccine each year starting at six months through eighteen years of age.
- A second dose of flu vaccine is required for children aged six months through 8 years who are getting vaccinated for the first time. The second dose must be given 28 or more days after the first.
- This is because those children need two doses of vaccine given 4 weeks or more apart. The first dose primes the immune system; the second dose provides immune protection. If your child needs two doses, begin the vaccination process early.
- Children under 6 months of age can get very sick from the flu, but they are too young to get a vaccine. The best way to protect them is to make sure that every member of their household and all of their caregivers are vaccinated.
- CDC recommends that all children aged 6 months up to their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday get a flu vaccine. This is because vaccination is the best method for preventing flu and its potentially severe complications in children. Vaccination reduces the risk for flu in that child and also reduces the chances that the child will expose others who might be more vulnerable to influenza complications (like babies and grandparents). Vaccinating children also reduces the chances that parents will have to miss work to care for children sick with the flu.
- Children who have no insurance or whose insurance does not cover immunizations may be eligible for the Vaccines for Children Program and can receive free flu vaccine.

### **Racial/Ethnic Groups – Hispanics**

- Hispanics 65 and older often suffer from chronic health conditions such as diabetes and heart disease, which make them more susceptible to flu-related complications that can lead to hospitalization and even death.
- Latinos aged 65 and older are among the groups hardest hit by influenza. CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against this serious disease.

### **Timing/Extended Season/National Influenza Vaccination Week**

- National Influenza Vaccination Week is aimed at raising awareness about the seriousness of influenza and the importance of vaccination. NIVW is December 8 to 14, 2008 this year.
- Since the flu season usually peaks in January or later, getting vaccinated in December and beyond can still provide protection against influenza.
- You can get vaccinated as soon as you hear vaccine is available. Getting vaccinated early ensures that you will be ready when influenza season arrives.
- But, if you didn't get vaccinated earlier, you can still get the vaccine.

- Make a New Year's Resolution to protect yourself and your family by getting the flu vaccine today.
- It's not too late to protect yourself and your loved ones against the flu. See your health care provider to get the flu vaccine or seek out other opportunities to get the vaccine.
- The flu vaccine clinic locator is a helpful tool to find vaccine in your area:  
<http://www.flucliniclocator.org/>
- The protection you get from the flu vaccine will last for the entire flu season.

### **Vaccine Production, Distribution, and Anticipated Supply**

- Manufacturers are predicting that there will be plenty of vaccine this year.
- At this time, manufacturers predict that they will be able to produce as many as 146 million doses of vaccine for the United States.
- Vaccine is distributed in phases as it becomes available beginning in late August and through December. Most of the vaccine is expected to be distributed by the end of November.

### **Updated Vaccine Messages for this year – Thimerosal and Safety**

- As many as 50 million doses of thimerosal-free influenza vaccine will be (are) available this year.
- If you are concerned about thimerosal, ask for thimerosal-free influenza vaccine.
- Several large studies have found no link between children who got vaccines with thimerosal and autism.
- Vaccines are carefully monitored for any sign of safety concerns by scientists and physicians.

### **Vaccine Mismatch Concerns**

- There are many different influenza viruses and they are changing constantly so every year there are new strains of flu.
- The likelihood that influenza vaccine will protect a person depends on at least two things: 1) characteristics of the person being vaccinated (such as their age and health) and 2) the similarity or "match" between the influenza viruses in the vaccine and those spreading in the community.
- The closer the "match" between the influenza viruses in the vaccine and those spreading in the community, the more effective the vaccine is likely to be in preventing influenza.
- We cannot know for certain what virus strains will predominate over the season because flu viruses are constantly changing.
- Influenza vaccine production begins as early as 9 months before vaccine becomes available. Each production cycle begins by selecting the strains that are the best match to the flu strains anticipated to be circulating during the upcoming flu season.
- Because of this long lead time and the fact that flu viruses are constantly changing, there is always a risk that circulating flu viruses may be different than those in the vaccine.
- All three of the virus strains have been changed from last year's vaccine.
- The vaccine contains: an A/Brisbane/59/2007 (H1N1)-like virus; an A/Brisbane/10/2007 (H3N2)-like virus; a B/Florida/4/2006-like virus.

- These are three main flu strains that research indicates will cause the most illness during the upcoming flu season.
- These viruses were chosen for the vaccine in February 2008 based on surveillance data, laboratory information, and availability of reference vaccine strains.
- The vaccine can protect you from getting sick from these three viruses or it can make your illness milder if you get a different flu virus.
- While selecting which influenza viruses are likely to circulate in the upcoming season is a challenging task, there is a good track record.
- In 16 of the last 20 seasons, the viruses in the influenza vaccine have been well matched to circulating viruses.
- We are optimistic that this year's vaccine will be on target in protecting against the flu.

## Appendix B: 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

CONTACT: Tom Jones

California Department of Health Services

Phone: (916) 555-5555

Fax: (916) 555-5500

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

**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 WEB SITE, IF APPLICABLE]**.

###

## **Appendix C: Public Service Announcement Tip Sheet**

Public service announcements (PSAs) offer you the opportunity to promote your flu vaccine 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 most 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**

Media serving diverse communities offer an outstanding opportunity for PSA placement, especially if you offer in-language PSAs. This is because there is often a lower demand for paid advertising among these media. Many mainstream advertisers simply overlook media reaching ethnic or specialized audiences, or consider the cost of adaptation to be too high so there is usually a higher-than-average availability for PSA time. In addition, not all PSAs are adapted for ethnic or specialized media, so there is less competition for PSA placement on these outlets than in mainstream media. The key to placement in ethnic and specialized media is to make all communications meet the needs of that outlet’s target audiences.

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.

## Appendix D: Sample Matte Article

Words: 376

### **Protect your Child from Flu—Get Him Vaccinated ... and the Babysitter, Too!**

You've done your homework, researching and interviewing to find the best care for your child, but is your caregiver—nanny, babysitter, daycare worker or family member—protected against the flu?

Flu takes a big toll on young children. Each year in the United States, an average of 20,000 children younger than 5 are hospitalized because of flu-related complications. As many as 1 in 5 children under age 5 may have to see the doctor, visit the ER or other urgent care for treatment for flu. And tragically, around 100 children die from this serious disease each year.

That is why the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that children older than 6 months get vaccinated against the flu. CDC also recommends that close contacts, especially family members and caregivers, of children younger than 5 get a flu vaccine each year to provide added protection to this high-risk group.

Children under 6 months are too young to receive the flu vaccine, but they are among the most vulnerable to develop serious, even fatal, complications from flu. This makes vaccination of their close contacts especially critical.

“To significantly decrease your child’s chances of getting the flu, we encourage parents, all family members, and caregivers to get vaccinated as soon as flu vaccine becomes available in your community,” says Dr. Anne Schuchat, Director of the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The flu is a contagious disease that can cause symptoms such as high fever, sore throat, coughing, extreme tiredness, runny or stuffy nose, and even nausea and diarrhea in children. It can easily spread from person to person. Yearly flu vaccination should begin as soon as vaccine is available and continue throughout the flu season, into December, January, and beyond

“Vaccination is the single best protection against the flu,” says Dr. Schuchat.

While there are many different flu viruses, the flu vaccine is designed to protect best against the three main flu strains that research indicates will cause the most illness during the flu season. The vaccine can protect you from getting sick from these three viruses or it can make your illness milder if you get a different flu virus.

For more information about the flu vaccine, contact your doctor or local health department. To find a clinic near you, visit [www.flucliniclocator.org](http://www.flucliniclocator.org) and enter your ZIP code. To learn more, call CDC at 1-800-CDC-INFO or visit [www.cdc.gov/flu](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?
- Have you rented 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?

### **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 spokespersons 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 or adequate supply issues?
- Have you discussed in advance which key points will be made by each spokesperson?
- Have you designated a moderator in advance of 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 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 WEB SITE, 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 problems 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 Web site: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>

Immunization Coalitions Technical Assistance Network Web site: <http://izta.org>

U.S. Government pandemic and avian flu Web site: <http://www.pandemicflu.gov>

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

CDC Public Health Image Library: <http://phil.cdc.gov>

CDC online influenza press kit: <http://www.cdc.gov/od/oc/media/presskits/flu.htm>

National Vaccine Program Office Pandemic Influenza Web site:  
<http://www.hhs.gov/nvpo/pandemics>

MMWR Guide for Influenza: [http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/mguide\\_flu.html](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/mguide_flu.html)

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