



MARCH 2016

Influential News



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

Grassroots Collaborations Broaden Flu Vaccination Promotion

In this issue, we highlight NIVDP partners who have broadened the reach of flu vaccination promotion among African American and Hispanic populations. The NIVDP has engaged new partners, including grassroots organizations, health departments, and immunization coalitions. These partnerships have resulted in opportunities for future flu vaccination promotion activities.

Partner activities included:

- A health event organized by the Putnam County Health Department and the Reid Center for Community Development in Eatonton, Georgia, on February 3, 2016;
- An NIVDP workshop hosted by the New Jersey State Nurses Association in Trenton, New Jersey, on February 4, 2016;
- A “Dialogue for Health” for students held by Wilberforce Academy on March 24, 2016, at Wilberforce University in Ohio; and
- Flu vaccination messages that were promoted from the pulpit of Reverend Elisha Morris, minister at Higher Ground Temple, Church of God in Christ, in Camden, New Jersey, throughout February 2016.

SPOTLIGHTING PARTNERS

PARTNERS IN PUTNAM COUNTY, GEORGIA, HOLD HEALTH EVENT TO PROMOTE FLU VACCINATION

The Putnam County Health Department and Reid Center for Community Development coordinated an event for African American and Hispanic residents of Eatonton, Georgia, on February 3. The flu vaccination promotion event was part of an overall effort to improve the quality of life for residents through education and preventive health services.

Putnam County Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer of the Reid Center for Community Development, Janie Reid, led the event where community partners rallied to make it a success. Farmers & Merchants Bank, and The Peoples Bank promoted the event on their outdoor display signs in downtown Eatonton. In addition, the Georgia Family Connection Partnership, a nonprofit coalition that promotes the well-being and health conditions of families in Putnam County, encouraged their clients to get vaccinated. The *Eatonton Messenger*, a local newspaper, promoted the event and the Putnam County Health Department, the Reid Center, and Family Connections displayed CDC flu vaccination posters and distributed flyers to the community. A local Walgreens pharmacist administered approximately 18 flu vaccines, and the health department disseminated CDC *Flu Talk* materials.

“This was a wonderful community event with strong local involvement,” said Nurse Peggy Pettit of the Putnam County Health Department. The Putnam County Board of Commissioners presented a proclamation to Pettit and the Putnam County Health Department that recognized local NIVDP partners’ efforts during the 2015-2016 flu season and “urged all citizens to participate in the local flu vaccination drives and promotional activities planned here forth.” Putnam County partners plan to build on their initial success with continued awareness by increasing access to the flu vaccine by hosting flu vaccination events in the community.



*NIVDP partners gather at the Putnam County Board of Commissioners Building. **Back Row**, Left to Right: County Commissioners Fred Ward, Alan Foster, and Billy Webster; **Front Row**, Left to Right: County Commissioner Janie Reid; Putnam County Health Department staff Beth Reaves, Donna Waller, Brenda Chavez, Irene Mitchell, Tammi Eubanks, Peggy Pettit; County Commissioner Steve Hersey*

NEW JERSEY STATE NURSES ASSOCIATION HOSTS EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP

Twenty-five stakeholders who represented health departments, immunization coalitions, clinics, churches, and nurse associations gathered at the New Jersey State Nurses Association (NJSNA) in Trenton, New Jersey, on February 4. The goal of the workshop was to identify sustainability strategies, barriers, and best practices to promote and increase flu vaccination access among African American and Hispanic populations. The Office of Multicultural and Minority Health, the Trenton Health Team, and NJSNA collaborated to identify stakeholders to participate in the workshop.

Each stakeholder shared his or her background and organization's experience working within the community. Participants' recommendations included holding a grant writing workshop to help grassroots organizations access local funding. Participants also suggested that the NIVDP organize quarterly conferences calls to help new partners stay informed of the state immunization network's effort to increase flu immunization rates among African American and Hispanic adult populations. Several participants told stories that reinforced the importance of culturally relevant messages and addressed misconceptions about the flu and vaccination. The stakeholders also explained the importance of engaging health care providers by sharing educational tools that help them motivate patients to get an annual flu vaccination. The NIVDP will share the workshop report that outlines lessons learned with partners. Judith Schmidt, CEO of NJSNA, noted, "We are pleased to have worked collaboratively with some great partners to make the workshop happen. All of us are committed to a vision of increasing the vaccination rate of all adults in New Jersey and this meeting was a positive step to support that vision."

At the end of the workshop, 14 organizations joined the NIVDP by pledging to share information with colleagues, identify local spokespeople, and organize flu vaccination events. New partners include:

- TeleNurse
- Home Towne Rx Pharmacy
- West New York Health Department
- El Centro de Recursos para Familias (Family Resource Center)
- New Jersey Immunization Network
- Central Jersey Family Health Consortium
- Bergen Community College
- Trenton Health Team
- Children First Academy
- New Jersey Health Department
- United Way of Greater Mercer County
- Mount Airy Church of God in Christ
- City of Trenton Department of Health
- Office of Multicultural and Minority Health



Stakeholders discuss workshop topics in Trenton, New Jersey



Courtney Tilton, Project Coordinator, Trenton Health Team



Left to Right: Dr. M. Carolyn Daniels, Executive Director, Office of Minority & Multicultural Health, New Jersey Department of Health; Jeanette Oliveras, R.N., B.S.N., City of Trenton

LEADERSHIP WILBERFORCE HOSTS A “DIALOGUE FOR HEALTH” FORUM FOR STUDENTS



On March 24, Leadership Wilberforce hosted a “Dialogue for Health” forum on the Wilberforce University campus in Wilberforce, Ohio. Leadership Wilberforce is an ancillary academy of Wilberforce University that aims to enhance and develop students culturally, socially, entrepreneurially, and academically. E. Yvonne Lewis, CEO of the National Center for African American Health Consciousness, lead the discussion with 27 students. The session focused on African American health history and how it correlates to health disparities. Topics included diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and chronic kidney disease. Ms. Lewis led a discussion about the history of influenza and the

importance of immunizations to prevent flu and other communicable diseases, addressing some of the common misconceptions.

According to Anthony Edmonds, Assistant Director of Student Activities, “Leadership Wilberforce provides students a non-traditional learning experience. We want to prepare leaders to take better care of themselves in order to better care for others, as well as excel in their future endeavors.” Wilberforce University is the oldest privately owned, black, 4-year, fully accredited liberal arts institution in the country with a current student population of 689. Affiliated with the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the university was established in 1856.

REVEREND ELISHA MORRIS AND HIGHER GROUND TEMPLE, CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST, PROMOTE FLU VACCINATION THROUGH A FAITH-BASED NETWORK

New partner Reverend Elisha Morris is a minister at Higher Ground Temple, Church of God In Christ (COGIC) in Camden, New Jersey. Elisha Morris joined the partnership after Jasmin Senior, a fellow partner and President of the Urban League of Philadelphia Young Professionals, suggested that the Reverend reach out to the NIVDP. Soon after contacting the NIVDP, Reverend Morris attended the stakeholder workshop in Trenton, New Jersey, on February 4.

According to Reverend Morris, “There is strength in numbers and partnering with the NIVDP allows churches to be able to talk plainly about the importance of vaccinations. The church is the epicenter of the African American community and can carry a message about physical, mental, and spiritual health. COGIC has distributed CDC flu education materials to local supermarkets in Baltimore, Maryland, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. To further educate the community, Reverend Morris uses the pulpit to remind fellow church members about the importance of preventive health—including flu vaccination.

COGIC is the largest membership of Pentecostal Christian Churches with an estimated five million members in the United States, who are primarily African American. Other COGIC churches that have joined the NIVDP and continue to host flu vaccination events in their communities include Bethel COGIC in Charlottesville, Virginia; Elshaddi Ministries COGIC in Flint, Michigan; Genesee County COGIC Ministerial Alliance in Flint, Michigan; and the COGIC Jurisdictional Midwest area.



*Reverend Elisha Morris,
Higher Ground Temple,
COGIC*