

# Favorable Results from Statewide Efforts to Improve Influenza Immunization of Health Care Personnel in Kansas

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## Introduction

Annual influenza vaccination is recommended for all health care personnel (HCP) who have no medical contraindication.<sup>1</sup> In 2009, the Kansas Healthcare Collaborative (KHC) board of directors adopted a goal to increase Kansas' HCP seasonal influenza immunization rate to 100 percent by 2014. The goal addresses an important safety issue for patients as fully vaccinated health care personnel are key players in stopping the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases while also protecting themselves from unnecessary illnesses.

Beginning in January 2013, CMS required hospitals to submit summary data on influenza vaccination of HCP using the National Hospital Surveillance Network (NHSN) to impact FY 2015 CMS payment through the Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program.<sup>2</sup>

Objective: To describe results of efforts to improve HCP vaccination in Kansas since 2009.

## Methods

### Survey

Since 2008, KHC has conducted a statewide online survey to assess HCP seasonal influenza vaccination rates. The survey also included items related to policies on vaccination as a condition of employment, strategies used for increasing vaccination rates, barriers to achieving vaccination goals and other information.

To assure a high survey response, KHC used reminder emails and targeted follow-up phone calls. The survey response rate was 100% for the 2014-15 season, with 91.4% responding with data on immunization rates. Rates in previous years were comparable.

### Shift to NHSN HCP Categories and Definitions

For the 2014-15 season, the survey was modified to align with the national CDC Seasonal Survey on Influenza Vaccination Programs for Health Care Personnel, including categories and definitions for Licensed Independent Practitioners (LIP), volunteers and contractors.

### Education

In June 2015, KHC devoted its regular monthly webinar for hospitals to the topic of collecting and reporting HCP vaccination data through NHSN, as well as key strategies to improve vaccination rates, which include adoption of a "condition of employment" policy.

## Procedures

### Toolkit

KHC compiled a HCP Influenza Immunization toolkit<sup>3</sup> to support hospital efforts to improve vaccination rates for HCP. The kit included:

- A statement of the case for change
- Clinical guidelines
- Educational resources
- Sample policies, procedures and protocols from peer hospitals in Kansas.

### Press Release

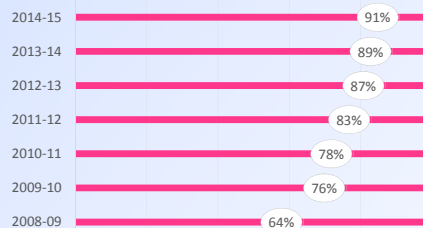
HCP vaccination survey results were reported annually through a statewide press release. In conjunction with the press release, the updated toolkit was provided to all community hospitals in Kansas to support the HCP vaccination efforts.

## Results

### HCP Influenza Vaccination

HCP vaccination rates in Kansas hospitals improved from 64% in 2008-09 to 91% in 2014-15. Reported vaccination rates were low among LIPs as compared to other HCP types and were lower in critical access hospitals.

HCP Influenza Vaccination (%)  
KHC Annual Survey, 2008-2014



HCP Vaccination (%) by Employee and Facility Type  
KHC Annual Survey, 2014-15

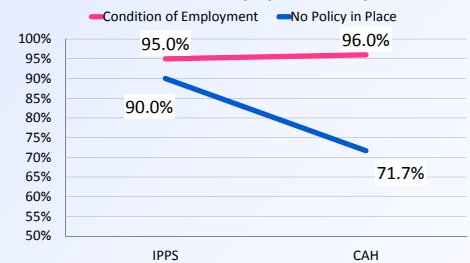
Subgroup	HCP Vaccination (%)
Total	91.0%
<b>HCP Type</b>	
Employees	92.5%
Licensed Independent Practitioners (LIP)	76.8%
Students/Volunteers	94.2%
Contractors	90.3%
<b>Facility Type</b>	
IPPS (N = 56)	93.5%
Critical Access (N = 81)	81.8%

## Results (Continued)

### Impact of the "Condition of Employment" Policy

The 2014-15 KHC annual survey included an item on policies for HCP vaccination as a condition of employment. Among those who responded (N=137), 53 (38.7%) reported having adopted such a policy. HCP vaccination rates were higher in facilities that reported having a policy requiring vaccination as a condition of employment. Critical Access Hospitals (CAH) with such a policy had HCP vaccination rates comparable to Inpatient Prospective Payment System (IPPS) hospitals. Among hospitals without such policies, the reported vaccination rate was much lower in critical access hospitals.

Vaccination Rate (%) by facilities with/without  
"Condition of Employment" Policy



### Other Efforts to Improve HCP vaccination

The five most frequently reported methods cited among Kansas hospitals for improving adherence to vaccination policies were: education on risks and benefits (77%), reminder notices (63%), educational advertisement campaign (61%), reporting rates to hospital administrators (60%) and tracking and targeting with data (45%).

## Conclusion

Vaccination of HCP in Kansas has increased significantly. Although there is still room for improvement, KHC will continue to provide educational resources to Kansas hospitals, encourage the adoption of policies to make influenza vaccination a condition of employment, and seek to establish Kansas as a role model for HCP influenza immunization.

## References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2011, November 25). Immunization of Health-Care Personnel: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). MMWR. Retrieved from [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr6007a1.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr6007a1.htm), May 13, 2016.
2. Medicare Program; Hospital Inpatient Prospective Payment Systems for Acute Care Hospitals and Long-Term Care Hospital Prospective Payment System and FY 2012 Rates; Hospitals FTE Resident Caps for Graduate Medical Education Payment, 76 Fed. Reg. 160 (August 18, 2011).
3. Kansas Healthcare Collaborative. Immunization Toolkit, retrieved from [www.khconline.org/initiatives/immunization-project](http://www.khconline.org/initiatives/immunization-project), May 9, 2016.