

**NURSING STUDENTS AS
HEALTH AMBASSADORS:
Implementing a University Influenza
Immunization Program
at Gannon University
Erie, Pennsylvania**

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Objectives

□ *At the completion of this presentation, participants will be able to:*

**Articulate creative approaches to implementing an influenza vaccination campaign in a University setting*

**Identify measures to involve students in the planning and implementation of an on-site immunization campaign in the academic setting*

THE PROBLEM

- Influenza causes significant morbidity in college and university students (Nichol, Heilly, and Ehlinger, 2008)
 - College/University students have a unique “social mixing pattern” which may enhance the transmission of Influenza and Influenza Like Illness (Nichol et al, 2005)
 - Influenza or Influenza Like Illness has been reported to result in:
 - ❑ Missed school days (83%)
 - ❑ Doing poorly on an assignment (46.3%)
 - ❑ Doing poorly on an exam (27.8%)
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- Nichol KL, Tummers K, Hoyer-Leitzel A, Marsh J, Moynihan M, et al. (2010) Modeling Seasonal Influenza Outbreak in a Closed College Campus: Impact of Pre-Season Vaccination, In-Season Vaccination and Holidays/Breaks. PLoS ONE 5(3): e9548. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0009548

A PERFECT STORM

- Influenza vaccination rates are persistently low in College and University campus populations in the U.S.
 - ❑ *2010 data from the American College Health Association (ACHA) reveal influenza vaccination rates on college/university campuses ranged from 2.4% (Alabama) – 59% (Kansas) (ACHA, 2013)*



A WORD ABOUT GANNON UNIVERSITY

- ❑ *Gannon University is a Four Year Catholic University situated in an urban setting in Erie, Pennsylvania*
- *Mission: Gannon is a Catholic, Diocesan university dedicated to excellence in teaching, scholarship and service. Our faculty and staff prepare students to be global citizens through programs grounded in the liberal arts and sciences and professional specializations. Inspired by the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, we offer a comprehensive, values-centered learning experience that emphasizes faith, leadership, inclusiveness and social responsibility.*
- ❑ *Approximately 4,000 in the student population*
 - Graduate and Undergraduate majors
 - The Morosky College of Health Professions and Sciences offer pre-professional programs and majors in nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, respiratory therapy, radiologic sciences, and physician assistant.
 - **35% of the student body are Health Science majors**
 - As of 2012 many affiliated clinical agencies began to require documentation of influenza vaccination for students assigned to those agencies for clinical experiences/rotations

Nursing Students as Health Ambassadors: A Creative Approach to Implementing a University Wide Influenza Vaccination Program

- ❑ *Utilize senior baccalaureate nursing students enrolled in a community health course to coordinate a University Influenza Vaccination Program*
- ❑ *A “Perfect Fit”*
 - **Emphasis by the University on Service Learning**
 - **Course Description**
 - This course provides students a perspective of professional nursing at the community level of practice. Content will provide an overview of specific issues and societal concerns that affect community health nursing practice; such as epidemiological and geographic information systems (GIS) and applications in community health nursing; educational theories, models, and principles applied in community health nursing; risk factors and health problems for defined populations across the lifespan, issues and **approaches in providing for the health care of defined populations in the community**; specific health care needs and issues for populations at risk, such as the homeless and the poor; communicable disease risk and prevention; and the diversity in the role of the community health nurse. Students apply previous knowledge and the nursing process in maximizing the health status of individuals, families and defined populations within the community. While the overall goal is the development of a healthier community, students will focus on health promotion, life-style factors, and disease prevention strategies for assigned individuals and families. In addition, **students will be responsible for developing a health fair or other aggregate focused community health improvement project, which addresses the needs of a defined population (or populations) within the community. Students will identify methods appropriate for evaluation of the strategies employed at increasing the health status of the defined population served by the proposal.**

Student Assignment with Faculty Collaboration

- ❑ *Establish Partnership with University Health Services and agency charged with providing Influenza Vaccination Campaign for Erie County (Lifeworks Erie)*
- ❑ *Perform Community Assessment*
- ❑ *Develop Promotional Pieces and Publications (Campus Flyers; Potty Press; Blast emails)*
- ❑ *Establish Policies and Procedures for Administration of Influenza Vaccination and Emergency Procedures in collaboration with Erie County Immunization Provider*
- ❑ *Complete training on new Intradermal Fluzone Vaccine Administration*
- ❑ *Develop Site Map*
- ❑ *Collaborate with other University Offices*
 - Administration
 - Academic Units and Leaders
 - Communications Office
 - Security
 - Maintenance
- ❑ *Provide Immunizations*
- ❑ *Evaluate Outcomes*

OUTCOMES

❑ *450 Influenza immunizations provided at a one day event*

- In years previous to this event Student Health Services provided less than 50 influenza immunizations annually

❑ *On-site Evaluation - Data Highlights*

- **The most often cited ways in which participants heard about the event were: Campus Flyer , Potty Press, and email**
- **49% of participants had received a flu shot previously**
- **55% reported that “a flu vaccination is very important to my health”**
- **“How likely are you to recommend getting a flu shot to another student, faculty, family member or friend”?**
 - **Very Likely (71%)**
 - **Likely (20%)**
- **The most important factors in the participants’ decision to get a flu shot were:**
 - **“Don’t want to miss classes/work due to illness” (40%)**
 - **“Flu Shot Clinic on campus made it easy” (38%)**
 - **“Recommendation by my primary care provider” (12%)**
 - **“Required by a clinical/cooperative learning or similar agency (9%)**

Additional Outcomes

- ❑ *Nursing students responsible for the event evaluated the experience very favorably*
 - Nursing students even taught registered nurse volunteers the intradermal technique!



Additional Outcomes

- ❑ *Positive View of Nursing as a School within the University and as a Profession*
- ❑ *Interdepartmental Collaboration Model*
- ❑ *“Lived Experience” of community partnerships and collaboration for students as future leaders in the field of Healthcare*



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE CAMPAIGNS

- ❑ *Use social media to promote the event and create a Gannon University norm to obtain an annual influenza vaccination*
- ❑ *Encourage faculty to “bring a class” to the event*
- ❑ *Explore incentives and their effectiveness in promoting annual influenza vaccination at Gannon University*

CONCLUSION

- **How could you and your partners prevent influenza on your campus?**
 - ❑ *Start Small and Grow!*
 - ❑ *Collaboration is Key!*
 - ❑ *Students can often achieve great outcomes with faculty permission to be creative, along with faculty support in developing skills in collaboration and problem solving!*