



Influenza Vaccine Action Plan

Medicare Advantage Star Ratings Campaign

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An influenza (flu) immunization action plan presents a compelling opportunity to improve Medicare Advantage member health and profitability, netting over \$1MM to a 50,000 member plan. Our action plan demonstrates how to conceive, design, and execute a campaign to close the flu immunization care gap with seniors.

Moreover, as executives budget for the forthcoming year, this action plan may be used as a general model for how to improve Star Ratings.

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17 – 18 Methodology

Understanding the Flu Vaccine Landscape

90% of people who die from flu complications are seniors

Seniors at risk of significant illness or death from flu complications

Influenza leads to more than 200,000 hospitalizations in the average year, with 33% of these being to individuals 65 years and older. The flu also causes up to 49,000 deaths each year, depending upon the severity of the flu season, and 90% of those deaths are seniors.¹

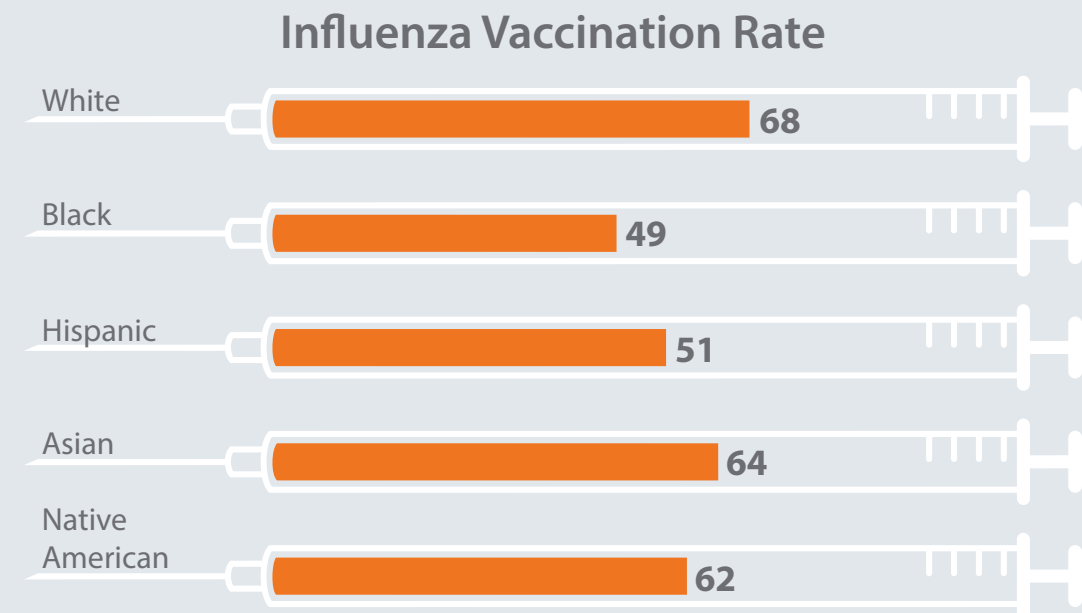
African-American and Hispanic seniors face a double jeopardy

African-Americans and Hispanics are about 75% less likely to be vaccinated than whites.² Moreover, these two groups' greater likelihood of having a chronic condition—such as diabetes, heart disease, or asthma—factors which increase the risk of hospitalization or even death from flu.

¹ <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/flu.html>

²Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Center for Health Statistics. National Health Interview Survey, 1997-2009.

Percentage of seniors vaccinated by race and ethnicity



Source: Missed Opportunities: Influenza and Pneumonia Vaccination in Older Adults," American Lung Association.

“If delivered consistently, a way to reduce health disparities, since vaccines have the potential to protect all racial and ethnic groups equally.”

– American Lung Association

Understanding the Flu Vaccine Landscape

Flu vaccine 45% effective

Flu vaccine averts hospitalizations for seniors

For the last five flu seasons, the influenza vaccine was on average 45% effective for the population as a whole. For seniors, the vaccine plays a crucial role in preventing hospitalizations—for example, by 77% for adults 50 years and older during the 2011-12 season.³

Flu vaccine effectiveness slated to increase

The current availability of a quadrivalent vaccine that protects against four flu strains (versus traditional trivalent vaccine) increases the likelihood of a good seasonal match.⁴ Moreover, the vaccine's effectiveness does not decline during the season but rather remains in force for six months.⁵ This new research means that seniors vaccinated in early October are protected against those flu strains for the duration of the flu season, through March. Currently in development is a universal flu vaccine that might only need to be given once in a lifetime.⁶

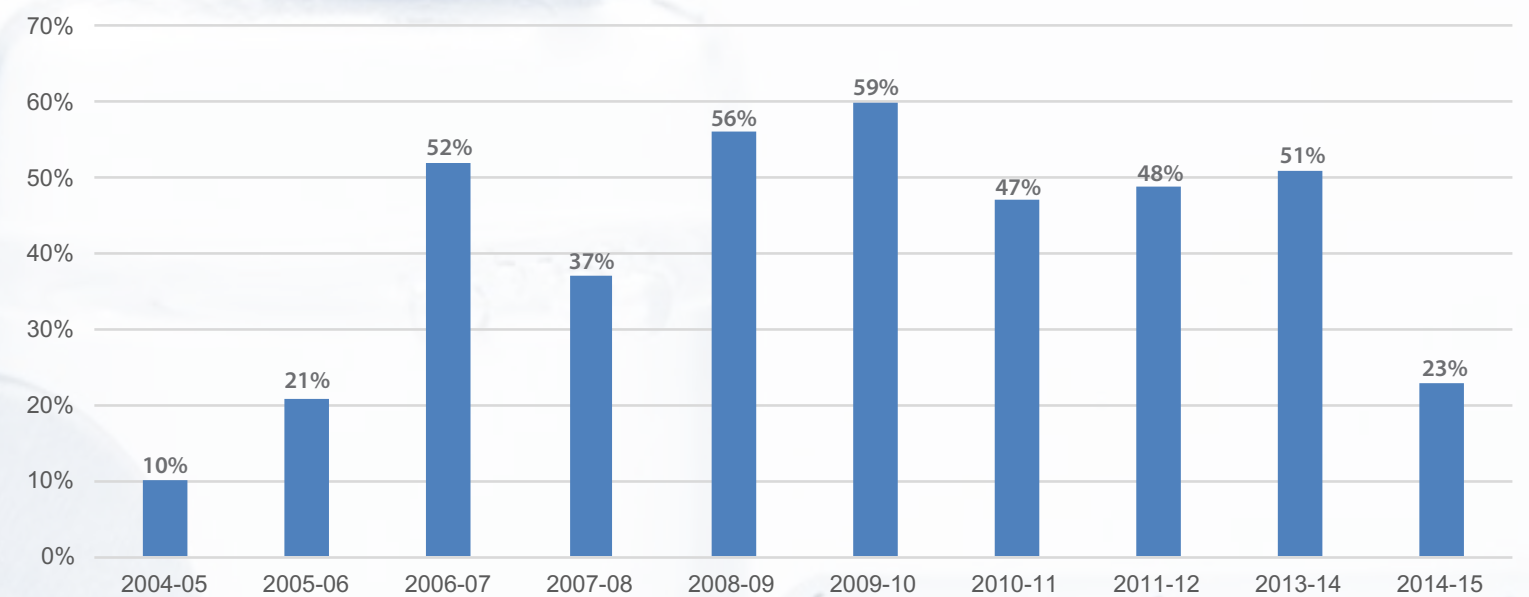
³ <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/vaccineeffect.htm>

⁴ <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/vaccine/quadrivalent.htm>

⁵ <http://consumer.healthday.com/infectious-disease-information-21/flu-news-314/flu-vaccines-offer-about-six-months-of-protection-study-702612.html>

⁶ <http://www.economist.com/news/science-and-technology/21662365-scientists-are-developing-jab-might-only-need-be-given-once-lifetime-why-universal>

U.S. Influenza Vaccine Effectiveness by Season



Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/vaccination/effectiveness-studies.htm>

Understanding the Flu Vaccine Landscape

Despite flu vaccine effectiveness, seniors not universally compliant

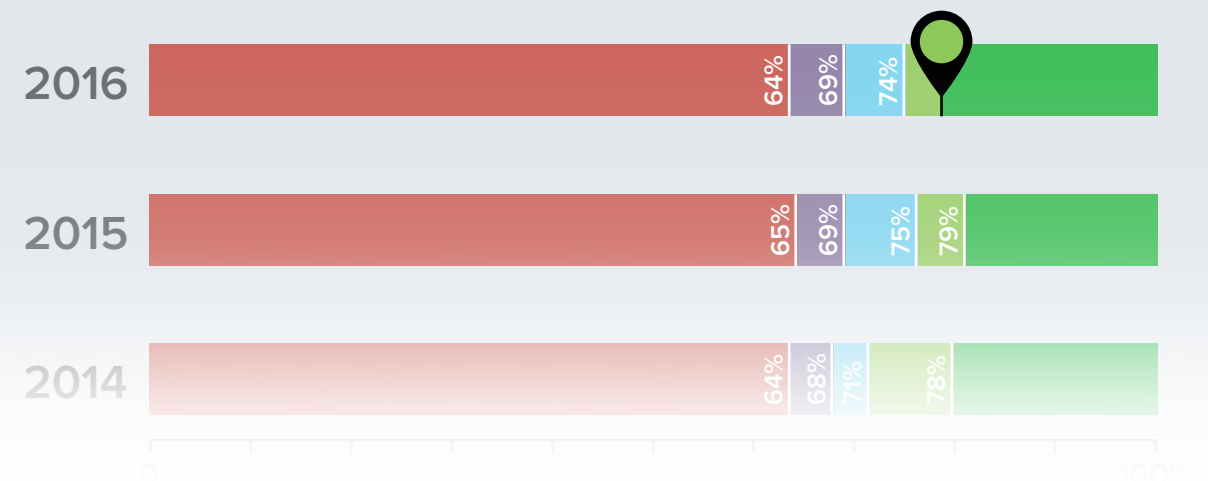
Less than three quarters of seniors are compliant with flu vaccine

Despite the effectiveness of immunization, seniors have not universally adopted the vaccine. In the CMS national averages for Medicare Advantage plans, 72% of seniors reported receiving the vaccine for the 2016 Star Ratings. In the prior two years, the number was similar, at 73% in 2015 and 71% in 2014.⁷

Comparison against screening measures suggests opportunity

Compared to a mammogram and a colorectal test or colonoscopy, the flu vaccine is far quicker to obtain and more widely available. Yet the 2016 four Star cut point for Flu Vaccine and Breast Cancer Screening measures were both 74%. Colorectal Cancer Screening was not much lower, at 71%.⁸

Flu Vaccine Cut Points



Download the
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