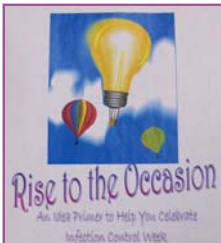




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## Infection Control Week 2008



This year the RICNs once again shared the "Rise to the Occasion Idea Primer" to help ICPs celebrate Infection Control Week

The primer contains a variety of ideas – from group activities to individual activities, contests, activities for learning and others just for fun, some that are quick as well as those that require more preparation.

In addition, a new set of activities has been developed called Primer Addition 2008. Check out both of these resources by visiting the RICN main home page at [www.ricn.on.ca](http://www.ricn.on.ca) or calling your local Network.

Infection Control week is a perfect opportunity to share information about preventing and controlling the spread of infection with your colleagues, clients and community members.

## Public Reporting – Patient Safety Indicators

On May 28, 2008 former Minister of Health and LongTerm Care, The Hon. George Smitherman, announced that all Ontario hospitals would be required to report publicly on eight patient safety indicators. This is part of a comprehensive plan to create an unprecedented level of transparency in Ontario's hospitals.

Seven of the eight indicators relate directly to infection prevention and control. Hospitals will submit their patient safety data monthly to the Ministry and post the data on their own web site.

The public reporting of the eight indicators will be phased in starting with *Clostridium difficile* on September 26, 2008. Each public hospital will be required to post their rate for *C. difficile* cases acquired in their facility on the hospital web site. In addition to the public reporting of *C. difficile* rates, outbreaks of *Clostridium difficile* associated disease (CDAD) have been made reportable to local public health units effective September 1, 2008. This will assist in ensuring that hospitals have all the necessary support needed to manage outbreaks of CDAD within their facilities.

In December 2008 the patient safety indicators for Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and Vancomycin-resistant Enterococci (VRE) will be added to the list of publicly reported indicators. The Ministry is currently finalizing these indicators and will be sharing this information with all hospitals in the early Fall. These indicators will be followed by the remaining four indicators in early 2009.

The requirement to report publicly has created demands on public health units as well as the hospitals and their infection prevention and control programs. The Ministry has worked with the Regional Infection Control Networks (RICNs) to provide education programs, tools and support to both hospitals and public health units. The RICNs will continue to play this vital role as the remaining patient safety indicators are rolled out. Hospitals and public health unit staff are encouraged to contact the RICNs with any questions they may have related to the patient safety indicators. The RICNs will ensure that this information is shared with the Ministry staff and provide feedback to their local stakeholders.

The public reporting of these patient safety indicators heralds a new step in health care. It provides information to the public on the care they receive and builds the collaboration between all sectors of health care as we work toward providing the safest care possible for all Ontarians.

For more info go to: <http://patientsafetyontario.net>

## Top 10 Tips for a Successful Influenza Immunization Campaign

1. Develop a plan! Ask who, what, where and when. Be prepared to answer the question 'why?' and look back at what was done in previous years.
2. Spread the word! Dispel the myths of immunization and let everyone know about the dates and times that they can receive the vaccine.
3. Hold a kick off event! Make sure everyone knows about your campaign!
4. Have snacks for the people being vaccinated! Everyone loves food and they can enjoy themselves as they wait the 10-15 minutes before they can go back to work.
5. Provide prizes or freebies as incentives! Contact your RICN to see if they can provide you with some alcohol based hand rub or other treats to provide to those who receive the vaccine.
6. Keep communicating with your organization! Use a visual immunization meter! Send messages to your organization about your campaign progress throughout!
7. Provide information to 'clients' and create records as they are vaccinated!
8. Encourage all staff and patients or residents to get vaccinated! The influenza immunization is recommended for almost all Canadians.
9. Evaluate your campaign! What would you do differently next time? Make recommendations.
10. Celebrate your success! Thank all who were involved, publish and distribute a post-campaign report, plan for next year.

## Influenza Immunization

Eleanor Paget PHN, BScN, Middlesex-London Health Unit



As the fall and winter months approach, it is time to think about protecting yourself and those around you from influenza by receiving your annual influenza immunization. There are numerous benefits afforded to being protected from influenza. So here is a quick reminder of why influenza immunization is important.

- Your chances of getting sick with influenza and missing work will be reduced.
- In a year where the strains in the vaccine match the circulating strains in the community, the influenza vaccine is 70%-90% effective in preventing influenza illness in healthy individuals from 2-64 years of age. Some degree of cross protection may occur during seasons where the vaccine is not a good match with the circulating strains of influenza.
- Unprotected children have about a 40% chance of getting sick with influenza. If your family is not protected and your child(ren) get sick, it is likely that other members of your family who are unprotected against influenza will get sick as well. Immunizing your children against influenza can reduce influenza symptoms in household members by 42%. If the entire family is protected, illness due to influenza can be reduced by up to 80%.
- Protecting yourself against influenza could prevent serious complications associated with influenza illness and save the lives of elderly people and those with compromised immune systems who are around you. If you are protected against influenza and practice good hand hygiene, your ability to transmit influenza to people who are at increased risk for complications or death is reduced significantly.

### Hot off the Press

In August, the latest version of the Ontario Health Plan for an Influenza Pandemic was released by the Emergency Management Unit of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. A collaborative effort of experts from across health, labour and government sectors, the 2008 iteration contains enhanced detail and information on specific facets of pandemic management. Revisions have been incorporated in the planning guidelines for laboratories, pediatric services and long-term care homes. New chapters cover the planning and management of critical health services such as chronic or acute kidney illness and Ontario's blood supply

To access the OHPIP 2008, visit

[http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/emu/pan\\_flu/ohpip2/plan\\_full.pdf](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/program/emu/pan_flu/ohpip2/plan_full.pdf)

## More on Flu...

We all know that influenza vaccine is recommended by experts as a primary means for prevention of this annual, unwanted visitor. Generally, there is agreement among healthcare professionals and the general public that influenza vaccine is important for old people. But what about the rest of us? Did you know that:

Children under the age of 5 have rates of hospitalization related to influenza that are similar to those among individuals aged 50 through 65? Last year in Canada, 492 children were hospitalized with influenza, and 3 of those died.

Healthy pregnant women are at greater risk for hospitalization due to complication of influenza, and are now identified in both the USA and Canada as a specific priority group for influenza immunization. The risk is increased with the stage of pregnancy (e.g. it is higher in the 3rd than the 2nd trimester).

All persons who provide care to anyone at risk of the complications of influenza should be vaccinated every year. The National Advisory Committee for Immunization states:

"NACI considers the provision of influenza vaccination for HCWs who have direct patient contact to be an essential component of the standard of care for the protection of their patients. HCWs who have direct patient contact should consider it their responsibility to provide the highest standard of care, which includes annual influenza vaccination. In the absence of contraindications, refusal of HCWs who have direct patient contact to be immunized against influenza implies failure in their duty of care to patients."

### Protect Yourself: Get Vaccinated!!!

## Books for Cameroon Project



*"The Cameroon Book Project is complete! I would like to thank all of you for your assistance with this project, which resulted in the acquisition of an amazing 61 boxes containing 1047 books and journals for the hospitals of Cameroon. Books will be shipped out in October and should reach the infection control nurses in Cameroon by the end of the year. It will be a wonderful Christmas present for them. Again, thanks to all who participated and for your cooperative efforts shipping books to me."*

*Shirley MacDonald*

## Health-care worker, protect thyself—get a flu shot!

The numbers don't lie—health-care professionals tell their patients one thing and then do another. Despite the proven effectiveness and safety of the influenza vaccine, only about 56 percent of staff at acute-care facilities in our region received a flu shot last year.

Given the health-care worker's increased risk for contracting influenza and the minimal side effects of the vaccine, it's a mystery that more of them aren't protecting themselves and the ones they care about from this potentially deadly virus.

Most healthy adults who get the virus will recover within a week or so. Children under the age of two, however, are at the same risk of being hospitalized with influenza-related complications as adults over the age of 65.

Because adults can be contagious for up to 24 hours before exhibiting symptoms—some don't show any symptoms at all—it is possible to spread the virus unknowingly. One study conducted by British researchers showed that of the health-care workers they tested, 23 percent had been exposed to influenza. A majority of them—59 percent—didn't even realize it. These health-care workers could very well have caused serious problems for babies under the age of six months, the elderly or people with weakened immune systems.

Research shows that a vaccination is the single most effective action someone can take to prevent influenza infection and transmission among family, friends, co-workers and patients.

### A smart choice. The right choice.

Getting vaccinated couldn't be easier! Visit your family doctor or drop in to any of the many influenza vaccination clinics being held in our area.

## Needle Safety Regulation All Hospitals: Important Reminder

As of September 1, 2008 under O. Reg 474/07 [http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws\\_regs\\_070474\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_070474_e.htm), in every hospital as defined in the Public Hospitals Act and in every institution as defined in the Mental Hospitals Act, “when a worker is to do work requiring the use of a hollow-bore needle, the employer shall provide the worker with a safety – engineered needle that is appropriate for the work.”

Proposal to extend O.Reg. 474/07 to other health care workplaces by April 1, 2009

The Ontario Ministry of Labour is seeking consultation from Long Term Care Homes, designated psychiatric facilities not captured in the current regulation, Laboratories and specimen collection centers to “support effective implementation of the regulation which will help prevent front – line health care workers from suffering needlestick injuries”. See link <http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/about/consultation/needlesticksafety/index.html>



## Upcoming Education Opportunities in SEOICN

Contact SEOICN for more information or to register

### November 10

“ Protecting Health Care Workers : Whose Job is it Anyway!”

Sponsored by the Central Region Infection Control Network

Videoconference

SEOICN boardroom 8:30am-12:15pm

### November 14

University Health Network Infection prevention and control Education Day

Videoconference

Boardroom - Providence Care Mental Health Site  
Kingston 8:30am-4pm

### November 20

The Toronto Invasive Bacterial Diseases Network  
“Back to the Future: 16 Years of Group A Strep Research in Ontario “

Video Conference

SEOICN boardroom and other regional sites

Contact SEOICN for more information

### November 27

The Toronto Invasive Bacterial Diseases Network Presents: A morning of talks and TIBDN Updates

8:30am-12:35pm

SEOICN boardroom and other regional sites

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REGIONAL INFECTION  
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**South Eastern Ontario**