

VOL. 2 FALL 2008

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Infection Control Week 2008

October 20-24

In Waterloo Wellington, a hand hygiene campaign designed to target everyone entering our hospitals was developed by hospital ICPs, public health and WWICN.



The campaign involved a team of representatives from each of the groups involved as well as an ICP from another hospital. Team members interacted with passersby to discuss the importance of hand hygiene and ask them to sign a visible reminder of their commitment to keeping their hands clean — a “hand” on our “tree”. Participants received a bottle of WWICN alcohol-based hand rub and a bookmark to remind them of their commitment. There was media coverage in area newspapers and television. More photos on page 4!

Public Reporting – Patient Safety Indicators

On May 28, 2008 former Minister of Health and Long Term 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.

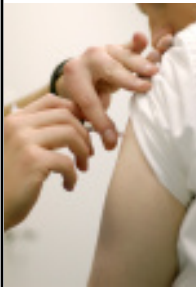
For more info go to: <http://patientsafetyontario.net>

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.

Protect yourself and people around you from getting sick this year by getting your annual influenza immunization. Additional measures to control the spread of illness this season include good hand hygiene, good coughing etiquette, and staying home if you are ill.

For more information about community influenza clinics in the Waterloo Wellington area, please contact:

Region of Waterloo Public Health at 519-883-2000

or

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health at 519-846-2715

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!!!

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

WWICN Happenings

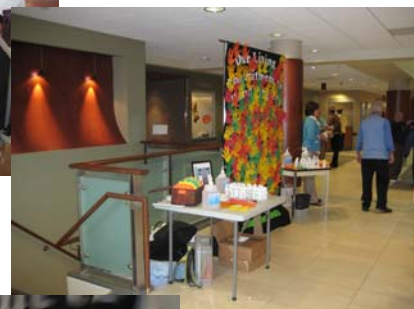
- **OPEN HOUSE** on September 23, attended by over 50 people
- Completing work on the **Chain of Infection Interactive Teaching Tool**
- Working with CSICN to develop an **electronic data collection tool** for surveillance in hospitals
- Working with area hospitals and the MOHLTC to ensure consistent communication of the **C. difficile public reports**
- Continuing to conduct **education sessions** in LTC and community agencies upon request
- Presentations at **public health events** such as Infection Connection in Guelph, ROWPH Infection Control Forum in Waterloo, and the Chatham-Kent Infection Control Committee education day
- Continuing to respond to your questions and requests for assistance (**we get about 40 inquiries per month!**)



**Our library continues to grow!
Watch for updated lists on our website www.ricn.on.ca.**

Please contact us if there are any IPAC resources that you require. If we don't have what you need, we'll try our best to get it for you!

Infection Control Week 2008



Thanks to everyone who participated in the hand hygiene events across Waterloo Wellington.

For more information about how you can run a similar campaign at your agency, please contact us at 519-624-9718.

This newsletter was prepared by

Waterloo Wellington Infection Control Network
350 Conestoga Blvd., Unit 4B4
Cambridge, ON N1R 7L7
Tel: (519) 624-9781
www.ricn.on.ca



Waterloo Wellington

*Giving Health
a Helping Hand*