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PRACTICE NOTE

Influenza Vaccination: Minneapolis, Minnesota, Veterans Affairs Medical Center's Mobile Vaccination Cart

PRACTICE

The Minneapolis Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) uses a mobile vaccination cart to deliver influenza vaccines to healthcare workers in different wards and departments of the VAMC. The cart boosts influenza vaccination rates among VAMC employees by making vaccines easily accessible in an employee's immediate work area.

DESCRIPTION

In the early 1980s, less than one-quarter of the Minneapolis VAMC's employees received an annual flu vaccine. The VAMC sought to increase vaccination rates by improving the convenience and efficiency of vaccine delivery. As part of these efforts, in 1985, the hospital introduced a mobile vaccination cart that delivers vaccine directly to workers.

VAMC nurses stock the mobile vaccination cart with all necessary influenza vaccination supplies each October and guide the cart through the different work areas of the medical center. The cart makes scheduled stops at individual wards and departments, but employees can visit the cart at any time on its route. Nurses distribute information about the vaccine to employees' mail boxes prior to the cart's arrival and use standardized documentation forms to keep records on employee vaccination. The mobile cart also provides an opportunity for nurses to educate VAMC employees about other influenza prevention and containment strategies. Nurses may answer employees' questions about influenza and reinforce the importance of measures such as proper hand hygiene.

Influenza vaccination rates for healthcare workers in the VAMC increased consistently following the initiation of the mobile cart program, reaching 65% during the 2003-04 influenza season. Other healthcare facilities have adopted the practice since 1985 and have noted similar successes in increased vaccination rates of their employees.

CITATION

"Interventions to Increase Influenza Vaccination of Health-Care Workers—California and Minnesota." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. Vol. 54, no. 8, Mar 2005.

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