

Title: Implementing a robust immunization program for hospitalized patients in a critical access hospital

Author: Forster RR.

Contact: rforster@sidneyrhc.com

Purpose: Sidney Regional Medical Center recognized the need to immunize our community's adult population with TDap, Pneumonia and Influenza vaccinations prior to discharge due to the resurgence of whooping cough, our COPD population and the benefits from influenza immunizations.

Design: Sidney Regional Medical Center's Pharmacy department developed a vaccination of hospitalized patients' policy that was approved through the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee and Medical Staff allowing pharmacist assessment of patient vaccine history and eligibility.

SRMC pharmacy is staffed around the clock and pharmacists are responsible for gathering medication information for all patients admitted to the critical care unit and acute care floor. Thus assessment of vaccination status aligned with our current medication reconciliation duties.

SRMC pharmacists committed to screening patients 18 and older for TDap, Pneumonia and Influenza vaccination eligibility upon admission to the hospital.

Pharmacists enter orders on the eMAR for eligible patients and nursing administers vaccines prior to discharge.

During implementation, the pharmacy staff developed processes for updating other information systems in our facility to assure vaccination status documentation in the clinic and extended care facility information systems.

The pharmacy department partnered with nurses and IT to monitor NESIIS for functionality of the interface and documentation of vaccination history.

Findings: Since inception of the program in September 2014 through February 2015, SRMC has administered 51 TDap, 27 Prevnar-13, 22 Pneumovax-23 and 38 Influenza vaccines to hospitalized patients who would likely not have received these immunizations.

Implications: Implementation and pharmacy driven ownership of the vaccination of hospitalized patients in our community has conferred an increased level of protection that over time will evince a healthier community and decrease healthcare expenditure due to avoidable illnesses.