

Increasing Senior Knowledge and Acceptance of Indicated Immunizations

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Background & Goals

- Creighton University (CU) Operation Immunization (OI) pharmacy student volunteers partnered with the Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA) to conduct a “Wisdom Circle” health education program for 60 Senior Companion Program volunteers. CU-OI goals were:
- Increase protection of seniors and their contacts by increasing vaccination rates
- Reinforce pharmacy student experiential learning on vaccine preventable diseases (VPDs), vaccines, and patient education practice

Design

- Nine “Wisdom Circle” tables covered four immunization topics among other health topics.
- OI designed brochures and “Flip Chart” presentations on four vaccine topics: Influenza, Tetanus/Pertussis, Shingles, and Pneumococcal Pneumonia.
- Seniors rotated to five 20-minute Wisdom Circle tables of their choice.
- Two student leaders at each table used the Flip Charts to educate on VPDs and vaccines, followed by group discussion and guidance.
- Informational brochures reinforced verbal content.

Demographics

- Sixty total ENOA volunteers participated in the event.
- Ten pharmacy student educators (4 second year; 6 fourth year) manned 4 immunization topic tables.
- Approximately 4-5 participants (range: 3-7) participated at each table over 5 sessions.

ENOA Volunteers

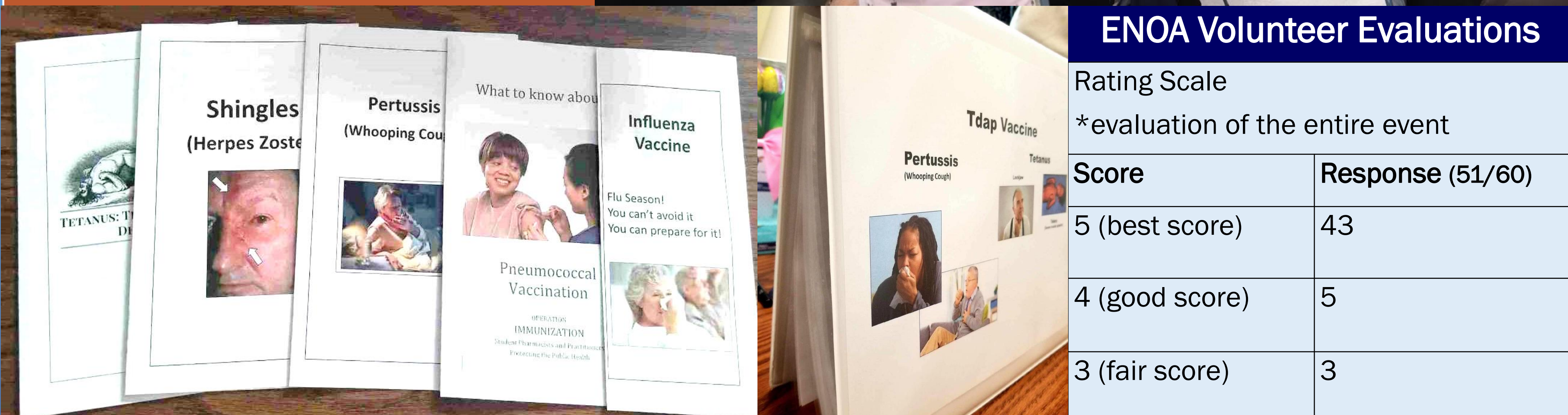
Male/Female	6 (10%)/54 (90%)
Ethnicity/Race	Caucasian: 13 (21%) African American: 47 (78%) Hispanic: 2 (3%)
Ages (years)	55-59: 3 (5%) 60-64: 6 (10%) 65-70: 21 (35%) 70+: 30 (50%)

“Wisdom Circles” with the ENOA Senior Volunteers



Prevention

- There are about 90 strains of pneumococcal bacteria
 - Vaccines can reduce infection risk for up to 23 of the most dangerous strains
- Vaccination is the best way to prevent pneumococcal infections
 - Two (2) pneumococcal vaccines are available
 - We all eventually need both vaccines, depending on our age/conditions
- A pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (**PPSV23** or Pneumovax 23)
 - Protects against 23 strains of the bacteria
- A pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (**PCV13** or Prevnar 13) protects against 13 strains of the bacteria, but it...
 - Produces superior immunity against these 13 strains



ENOA Volunteer Evaluations

Rating Scale

*evaluation of the entire event

Score	Response (51/60)
5 (best score)	43
4 (good score)	5
3 (fair score)	3

Student Educator Evaluations

“I was able to practice communicating information..., translating it in a way that is easy for someone at any health literacy level to understand.”

“I gained experience speaking to older adults and educating them about vaccines.”

“They told us stories of people they know who have experienced conditions like Shingles.”

“Even though we provide evidence-based information, [someone] sharing a personal experience is what can help people want to go through with it for themselves.”

“I gained the experience to answer their questions and screen them for vaccinations.”

“I was surprised by how engaged they were with our presentations.”

“One woman... was excited to share it to her grandchildren.”

Discussion and Implications

- During group discussion, participants shared stories and experiences with these diseases. Through this open sharing, both students and participants were able to gain knowledge and motivation for vaccination.
- Seniors experienced first hand how pharmacists can serve as a resource for immunizations.
- Student educators practiced patient communication and promotion of disease prevention through immunizations.
- Students experienced personal and professional growth by interacting with seniors from various cultural group and socioeconomic circumstances.
- Students were provided with an opportunity to work with community partners in serving the public health.

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