

Title: Increasing senior knowledge and acceptance of indicated immunizations

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Purpose

- Educate a senior group about vaccine preventable diseases (VPDs) and vaccinations
- Increase protection of seniors and their contacts by increasing vaccination rates
- Reinforce pharmacy student experiential learning on VPDs, vaccines, and patient education practice

Design/Methods

The Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging (ENOA) conducts a Senior Companion program; senior volunteers work with older individuals in need of assistance to maintain independence. ENOA conducted a "Wisdom Circle" health education program for volunteers utilizing nine topic tables. Student educators from Creighton Pharmacy's Operation Immunization (OI) participated. They 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.

Results

Sixty seniors and ten pharmacy students participated in the event. Ninety participant contacts occurred with approximately 4-5 participants (range: 3-7) per table per each of 5 sessions. Participants (85%; 51/60) evaluated the overall event, with 84% (43/51) rating their educational experience 5 (best) on a scale of 1-5. Student educators (80%; 8/10) provided narrative feedback which will be presented (perceived participant benefits and barriers, personal gain from experience, and suggestions for improvement).

Implications

This educational service had value for participants and educators. Participants gained knowledge and motivation for vaccination. Student educators practiced patient communication and promotion of disease prevention through immunizations. Participants educated each other and students through sharing experiences of these diseases. Students also experienced personal and professional growth by interacting with seniors from various cultural groups and socioeconomic circumstances. Such events provide students an opportunity to work with community partners in serving the public health, and inform seniors about pharmacists as a resource on immunizations.