



Health and Human Services Agency

Donnell Ewert, MPH, Director

Public Health

Terri Fields Hosler, MPH, RD, Branch Director

Andrew Deckert, MD, MPH, Health Officer

2650 Breslauer Way
Redding, CA 96001-4246
Phone: (530) 225-5591
Fax: (530) 225-3743
Toll Free: (800) 971-1999
CA Relay Service: (800) 735-2922

Health Advisory

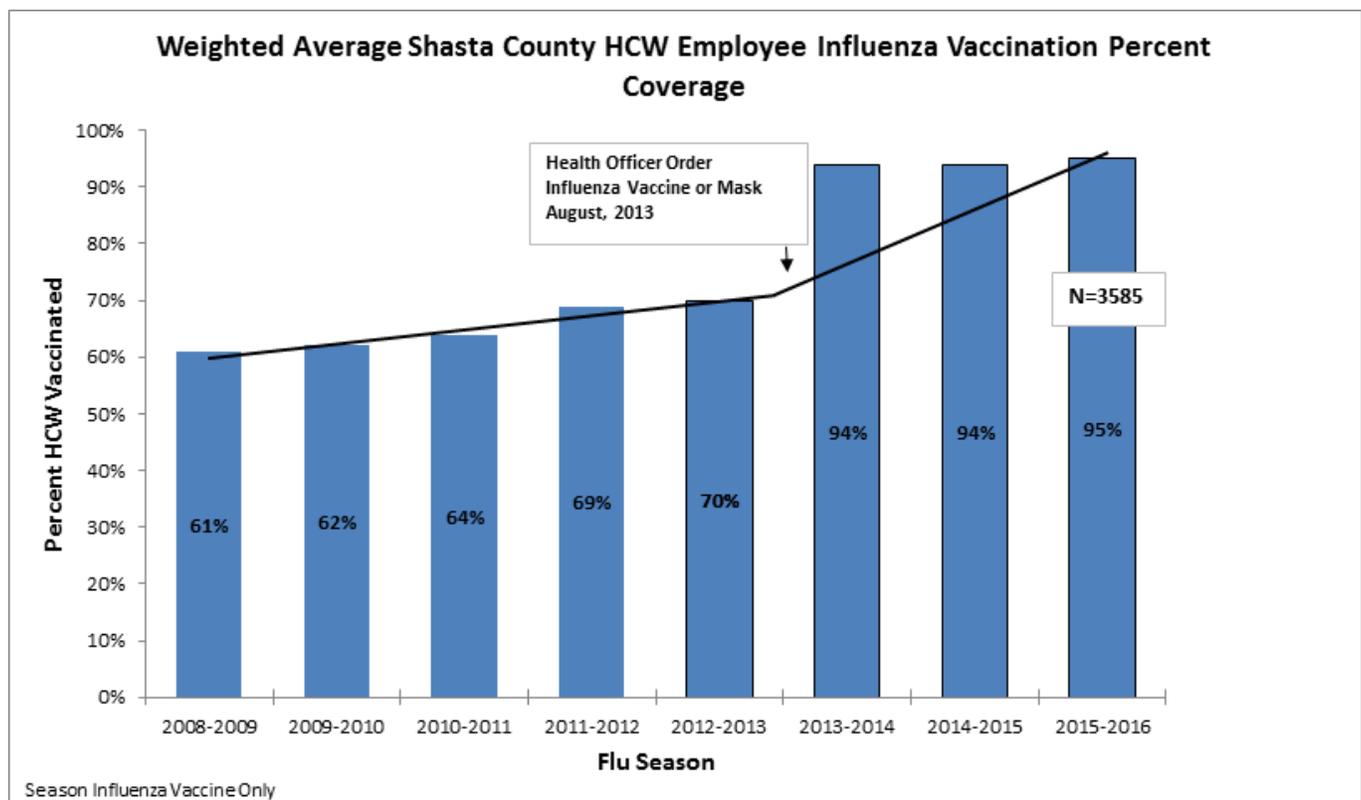
Flu Vaccine or Mask for Health Care Workers (HCW) Update

September 6, 2016

Please distribute to all providers in your practice

This health advisory reports HCW flu vaccination outcome percentages locally from the 2015-16 flu season. The HCW flu vaccine or mask order is on-going for 2016-17 and all subsequent year flu seasons (November 1 through March 31 each year).

A Health Officer order was issued August 2013 and is still in place requiring that all licensed health care facilities and ambulance services in Shasta County require their health care worker (HCW) employees, licensed independent practitioners (physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners with hospital privileges), volunteers, and contractors to receive an annual influenza vaccination or, if they decline, to sign a declination statement and wear a mask during each influenza season while working in patient care areas.



The aggregate flu vaccine coverage for health care workers employed at all 5 local general acute care hospitals in Shasta County rose remarkably--from 70% to 94%-- in just one flu season (2012-13 to 2013-14), and remained at a statistically higher aggregate of 95% (n =3,585 employees) for 2015-16. Congratulations to all for your due diligence and hard work for this great accomplishment!

4 of 5 hospitals improved their documented flu vaccine adherence for non-employee physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants with local hospital privileges (aka “Licensed Independent Practitioners” or LIP) from 2014-15 to 2015-16. Congratulations to those hospitals with an improved or 100% percentage of medical staff with documented flu vaccine adherence in 2015-16—Mayers (100%), Patients (100%), Shasta Regional Medical Center (93%) and Vibra (100%)!

However, the aggregate flu vaccine adherence documented for LIP for all 5 hospitals combined declined from 85% in 2013-14 to 78% in 2014-15 to 74% in 2015-16. This could be due to a number of factors, including some providers not submitting documentation submitted to hospital occupational health staff about received flu vaccine.

Providers, please make your best efforts to receive flu vaccine timely this year and to document that you have done so, protecting yourself and your family, as well as co-workers, patients and their families.

The five Skilled Nursing Facilities which reported had great employee flu vaccine rates in 2015-16. Copper Ridge, Golden Living, Kindred, Marquis and Veterans Home combined had 95% of their 863 aggregate employees get flu vaccine. Well done!

Skilled nursing facilities and hospitals, please report your employee, medical staff, contractor and volunteer flu vaccine rates to our infectious disease epidemiologist, by April 30th each year, at 245-6838 or via smtaylor@co.shasta.ca.us. Acute care hospitals have been required to report such flu categories of flu vaccine rates to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services as part of its Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program for years.

This 2016-17 flu season there are no changes to the flu vaccine or mask order.

For a review of the rationale, goals, Health Officer order, duration, required facilities, enforcement, definitions, legal authority and an FAQ regarding flu vaccine or mask in Shasta County, please visit our website at http://www.co.shasta.ca.us/index/hhsa_index/Community_partnerships/med_professionals/Flu_VaxMedProfs.aspx and click on the first two highlighted documents.

Conclusion

Numerous other jurisdictions, hospitals and other health care facilities in California, and across the nation, have similar flu vaccine policies. Numerous professional medical societies, patient safety and other organizations endorse such a policy. We appreciate your leadership and support in protecting the residents of our community.

For any additional questions, please see our website at the link above or contact Venessa Vidovich, RN, Supervising PHN, Shasta County Health & Human Services Agency—Public Health at 225-5621.

Sincerely,

Andrew Deckert, MD, MPH
Health Officer, Shasta County

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