**Flu fighter award winner case study**

Devon County Council substantially improved uptake of the staff flu vaccination in 2014/15, which led to the organisation winning a flu fighter award for the most improved campaign.

**The organisation**

Devon County Council (DCC) has more than 200 sites across Devon, covering 4,000 square miles.

**Campaign objectives**

Starting with a low rate of uptake the previous season, DCC’s flu team wanted to create a more impactful campaign that was easy to implement, cost effective and able to reach its dispersed workforce.

**What they did**

The flu team was formed from the public health team, the communications team and the business services teams to maximise its effectiveness across the authority.

They began by surveying staff to find out why they had previously refused to have the vaccine. The results highlighted concerns around it not being effective or making staff ill. These results were then used to inform the key messages of the campaign.

**How they did it**

The team recruited five members of staff to be campaign champions featuring them on posters and postcards which were prominently displayed in all offices.

The campaign was also promoted via weekly newsletters and internal communications, linking its key messages with national news, information from Public Health England and NHS flu fighter, to keep staff informed.

The council’s intranet page was the main channel for information and hosted FAQs about the vaccination. This had a big impact - through raising awareness of the severity of flu, it highlighted the importance for staff to be vaccinated and to encourage others to have the flu jab.

Due to the dispersed nature of the workforce, staff were asked to have the vaccination at their local pharmacy and claim the cost back. This not only enabled staff to have the jab at their convenience, but DCC was able to record vaccination figures by capturing the number of expenses claims submitted.
Results

The flu team carried out a thorough evaluation of their campaign and were pleased to see:

• an increase in uptake – from 10 people being vaccinated in 2013/14 to 122 people in 2014/15
• 180 responses to the evaluation survey
• positive feedback on staff being featured in the campaign
• an increased profile compared to previous years.

Comments received on the team’s evaluation survey included:

‘I think the staff campaign was better than any public campaign, I may have forgotten the jab otherwise.’
‘The campaign was good - it just needs actively following up through team meetings, or one to ones.’
‘Liked the posters, made you read further and great to see workmates on them.’

The team entered the flu fighter awards because of their hard work and fantastic achievements. The recognition from colleagues, both locally and nationally, has helped them gain momentum for the 2015/16 campaign, to further increase uptake and encourage more staff to join the fight against flu.

Top tips

• start planning as soon as the previous season ends to keep on top of the campaign when the new flu season starts
• keep in touch and tailor your messages to link in with the national campaign
• understand the barriers to the vaccine – be this staff concerns or where staff are based
• use positive and upbeat messaging and involve staff in the campaign.

Contact:
Alison Marks, Assistant Communications and Marketing Officer
alison.marks@devon.gov.uk

Further information

www.nhsemployers.org/flu
flufighter@nhsemployers.org
Join the conversation on Twitter @NHSFlufighter

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