

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT
RAPPORT

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DATE 29 December 1999

TO/DEST. Coordinator
Community Services Committee

FROM/EXP. Associate Medical Officer of Health

SUBJECT/OBJET **RESULTS OF BIG SHOT CHALLENGE/DÉFI-ÉCHEC
À LA GRIPPE :INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM
FOR RESIDENTS AND STAFF OF LONG-TERM CARE
FACILITIES**

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

That the Community Services Committee recommend Council receive this report for information.

BACKGROUND

Last winter, Ottawa-Carleton had a second widespread, approximately 12 weeks long outbreak of A/Sydney/5/97-like (H3N2) influenza likely affecting 25% of the population among all age groups. There were laboratory confirmed outbreaks in 22 long-term care facilities providing health and residential care with 16 related deaths, compared to 21 outbreaks with 45 deaths the year before. This wasn't the only recent example of the toll influenza can take. Ottawa-Carleton and the rest of the Champlain District Health Council area, (Pembroke through to Cornwall), rated 12 among 16 major Canadian centres for winter 1996/97 hospitalizations due to pneumonia and influenza among seniors, (*Maclean's* June 7, 1999 Health Report based on data from the Canadian Institute for Health Information).

As one means to improve the situation, the Region of Ottawa-Carleton Health Department, Homes for the Aged in Ottawa-Carleton, Ontario Nursing Home Association (Region 2), Ontario Residential Care Association (Region 2) and the Ottawa-Carleton Community Care Access Centre asked all long-term care facilities and health care (staffing) agencies to participate in a BIG SHOT CHALLENGE/DÉFI-ÉCHEC À LA GRIPPE! While facilities have always tried to immunize residents against influenza, the

value of staff immunization has been confirmed by a randomized study in England where immunizing 61% of staff reduced the influenza death rate in residents by 41% as a result of herd immunity. In addition, immunization reduces sick leave among staff due to influenza by approximately 40%. Evidence from cohort and randomised controlled trials suggests that each dose of vaccine yields a 1-2 hour decrease in lost work time, an average cost saving of approximately \$40 per immunized employee.

Thus the **goal** was to immunize at least **90% of residents and 70% of employees**, contract staff, students doing placement work, volunteers and health professionals coming into homes for the aged, nursing homes, chronic care facilities/units and retirement residences where care/assistance in the activities of daily living is provided. This applied to all employees etc. who may have the potential for acquiring or transmitting influenza during the course of their work, and not just to those employees providing direct resident care. Last season, 36% of facility staff were immunized on average. However, 10 facilities did reach or exceed the 90% and 70% marks.

RESULTS

Overall, the challenge was a remarkable success! The commitment and creativity of long-term care facility management, attending physicians, staff and residents to increase immunization rates was outstanding. Among 72 facilities legally designated as homes for the aged, nursing homes or retirement residences, **91% of residents and 77% of staff** are now immunized against influenza. BIG SHOT CHALLENGE/DÉFI-ÉCHEC À LA GRIPPE plaques are being awarded to 5 homes for the aged, (including the three homes operated by Regional government), 8 nursing homes, 28 retirement residences and 14 health care (staffing) agencies, (Annex A). Honourable mention for immunizing 60-69% of staff must be made for another 2 homes for the aged, 1 nursing home, 9 retirement residences and 3 health care (staffing) agencies, (Annex B).

The benefits are already apparent. The first laboratory confirmed influenza case in the Region was reported in a child on November 29th. The first long-term care facility outbreak began December 12th with A/Sydney/5/97-like (H3N2) influenza, back for its third year of outbreaks. Facility outbreaks to date have been small with mild illness in affected residents and no deaths.

During outbreaks, only persons who are immunized or taking anti-viral medication are allowed to work in the facility, (or affected part of very large facilities). Such exclusion is required in homes for the aged and nursing homes, as of November 1, 1999, by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. It is strongly recommended by the Region of Ottawa-Carleton Health Department for retirement residences and chronic care hospitals.

In the unlikely event that someone insists on working when they should not, Health Department staff will meet with the person and if necessary use the *Ontario Health Protection and Promotion Act* to order him/her from working in any long-term care facility in the region with an influenza outbreak. The use of such orders is supported by the September, 1999 *Recommendations of the Ontario Working Group on Influenza* issued by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

Given this year's success with BIG SHOT CHALLENGE/DÉFI-ÉCHEC À LA GRIPPE, it should be repeated in the fall of 2000. Acute care hospitals will be invited to participate as the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care recently announced that Public Health Branch funded influenza vaccine is now available for staff working in acute care hospitals. Previously, the hospital's global budget was expected to cover this expense.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

This campaign was developed as a collaboration of the Health Department, Homes for the Aged in Ottawa-Carleton, Ontario Nursing Home Association (Region 2), Ontario Residential Care Association (Region 2) and the Ottawa-Carleton Community Care Access Centre. Several meetings have been held since April with relevant associations, individual facilities and health care (staffing) agencies, post-secondary educational institutions and representatives of labour unions in order to develop a program with widespread support. The BIG SHOT CHALLENGE/DÉFI-ÉCHEC À LA GRIPPE campaign has had a strong health promotion focus involving all above-mentioned partners and 114 facilities/agencies. Key health promotion strategies were implemented to address barriers to staff immunization: 1) resource development/mailouts (flyers, posters, presentation materials); 2) orientation sessions; 3) media promotion e.g television/radio interviews, Flu Information Line; 4) advocacy, and; 5) individual consultation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Vaccine was supplied by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Individual facilities and physicians provided additional supplies. Funds were available in Account 151511 for the plaques.

CONCLUSION

Ottawa-Carleton long-term care facilities doubled staff influenza immunization rates this year. This will help reduce the previous, unacceptably high resident mortality rate due to influenza.

*Approved by
Dr. Robert Cushman*

**1999 BIG SHOT CHALLENGE/DÉFI-ÉCHEC À LA GRIPPE
AWARD RECIPIENTS**

Algonquin College	Orchard View Living Centre
Bearbrook Court Retirement Residence	Osgoode Care Centre
Billings Lodge	Para-Med Health Services Inc.
Blackburn Villa	Parklane Residence
Bradson Home Health Care	Pine Rest Residential Home
Brookside Manor Retirement Residence	Queenswood Villa Retirement Home
Camilla Gardens	Residence Duford
Career Canada College	Residence Ste. Marie
Carleton Lodge	Rideau Place Retirement Residence
Central Health Services	Riverpark Place Retirement Residence
Centre d'Accueil Champlain	Rockwood Residence
Communicare Therapy Inc.	Rothwell Heights Lodge
Cumberland Lodge	Sandy Hill Retirement Residence
Desjardins Pharmacy	Sarsfield Colonial Home
Elmwood Lodge	Senior Services Center (Rideau Township)
Extendicare Laurier Manor	Springfield Residence
Extendicare Medex	Steff-Kim Lodge
Extendicare New Orchard Lodge	St. Patrick's Home of Ottawa
Extendicare Starwood	The Arthritis Society
Extendicare West End Villa	The Edinburgh
GEM Health Care Services Inc.	Thorncliffe Place
Glebe Centre Incorporated	Unitarian House
Golden Care Home Support Services	Versa-Care Lodge
Island Lodge	Villa Marconi
Landmark Court	Vital Aire
Lynnwood Park Retirement Lodge	We Care Home Health Services
Manoir St. Joseph	Wymering Manor
Nepean Seniors Home Support	

**1999 BIG SHOT CHALLENGE/DÉFI-ÉCHEC À LA GRIPPE
AWARD HONOURABLE MENTION**

Central Park Lodges
Continental Health Care Services Inc.
Direct Care
Edgewood Residence
Hillel Lodge
Kanata Care Retirement Residence
Killian Residence
Madonna Nursing Home
Manoir Gallien
Ontario Medical Supplies
Perley & Rideau Veterans Health Centre
Presland Residence
Residence Mon Plaisir
Richmond Lodge
Stittsville Villa Retirement Home