

Telling Employers About Community Events

The sample dialogue presented below can be used as a guide for initiating a conversation with a business owner about hosting an influenza vaccination clinic at their place of business.

YOU:

[To contact person],

Hi, this is [Name] of [Pharmacy]. We recently sent you a letter about partnering with your company to host an influenza vaccination clinic at your place of business. Did you receive the letter?

If contact person did not receive the letter:

YOU: Influenza vaccination is the best way to help prevent the spread of the flu, and my pharmacy is helping by promoting influenza vaccination in our community.¹ As I'm sure you know, illness due to influenza has an impact on employee productivity.² One of the services we are offering this year is the opportunity for businesses like yours to partner with us to plan and host an influenza vaccination clinic. We make it easy for you by setting up the event and providing you with signage, posters, and patient brochures that you can use to promote the event to your employees. I'd be happy to discuss the program in more detail with you now, if you have time, or I can resend the letter. Should the letter go to you or someone else at [Name of Business]. Can I please verify the mailing address with you, or should I send it by email?

If contact person did receive the letter:

YOU: I'm sure you are aware of the costs of influenza illness for your business, especially the lost productivity and absenteeism caused when employees stay home to care for themselves or their family.² The virus is highly contagious, so once someone in the office is sick, it's easily spread to others.³ Our pharmacy is working to help achieve the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's goal of increasing the number of people 6 months of age and older who receive an influenza vaccination.⁴ As mentioned in the letter, one of the ways we are doing this is by partnering with businesses like yours to host influenza clinics. We will provide all the materials you would need to promote the event and would come to your office to administer vaccinations on a day of your choosing. Does this sound like a program you would be interested in offering your staff?

If contact person answers yes:

YOU: Great! The next step would be for us to meet and discuss the details of the event. When might be a good time?

In closing:

YOU: Thank you again for taking the time today to speak with me. I'm sure that this will be a successful program that will benefit your employees tremendously. I look forward to meeting with you. Have a great day!

Telling Employers About Community Events *(continued)*

If contact person answers no:

YOU: Ok. Would you mind helping me understand why?

Some possible scenarios:

CONTACT PERSON: It sounds like too much work, and I'm already overburdened.

YOU: Our staff will do all of the work leading up to the event. We can provide you with an email announcement template, brochures, and posters that you can use to promote the event. My staff can work with you to figure out how best to schedule appointments. On the day of the event, my staff will come to your place of business to set up the event with minimal disruptions to your normal operations. We can set up wherever you can find enough space for a table and a few chairs.

CONTACT PERSON: People can get flu shots elsewhere.

YOU: That's true. While many of your employees have probably already planned to get their vaccination either in the pharmacy or at their family doctor, there are just as many who have not planned to get vaccinated. In fact, less than half of all Americans get an annual influenza vaccination.⁵ By making it convenient for your employees to get vaccinated, not only can we improve on that number but we can also potentially reduce the impact of the illness on your business.

CONTACT PERSON: Flu isn't that serious.

YOU: Actually, it's a common misconception that influenza is not a serious illness.⁶ It can be serious for certain people, especially children, the elderly, pregnant women, or people who have other serious medical conditions like asthma and heart disease.^{1,7} In fact, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized each year due to influenza-related complications.⁸ And the virus constantly changes, so even if you got vaccinated last year, you'll need to get vaccinated again this year to help protect yourself.⁹ Sponsoring a program like this helps to prevent the flu in your employees and the community in general.

Telling Employers About Community Events *(continued)*

Closing:

Contact person refuses.

YOU: I understand. If you decide to reconsider, please feel free to reach out to **[Pharmacy]**. I'd be happy to discuss this further. In any case, I hope that you will spread the word about influenza vaccination among your employees. Thank you for your time.

Closing:

Contact person agrees to consider having the event.

YOU: That's great! I'm sure this will be a successful program that will do a lot of good for you, your employees, and their families. The next step would be for me to meet with you to discuss the details of the program. When might be a good time? I look forward to meeting with you. Have a great day!

REFERENCES: **1.** Key facts about influenza (flu) & flu vaccine. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website. <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/keyfacts.htm>. Updated 2014. Accessed May 15, 2015. **2.** CDC study: treating children's flu illness costly. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website. <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/spotlights/childrens-flu-costly.htm>. Updated 2012. Accessed May 18, 2015. **3.** Understanding influenza. American Lung Association website. <http://www.lung.org/lung-disease/influenza/understanding-influenza.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/>. Updated 2015. Accessed May 26, 2015. **4.** Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Healthy people 2020: Immunization and infectious diseases objectives. HealthyPeople.gov website. <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/immunization-and-infectious-diseases/objectives>. Updated 2015. Accessed May 15, 2015. **5.** National early season flu vaccination coverage, United States, November 2014. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website. <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/fluview/nifs-estimates-nov2014.pdf>. Accessed May 26, 2015. **6.** Flu vaccine misconceptions putting everyone at risk. National Consumers League website. http://www.nclnet.org/flu_vaccine_misconceptions_putting_everyone_at_risk_niie7ibifu2l0irddaud-9kyvjao. Updated 2013. Accessed June 17, 2015. **7.** People at high risk of developing flu-related complications. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website. http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/high_risk.htm. Updated 2015. Accessed May 27, 2015. **8.** US Department of Health and Human Services. Seasonal influenza (flu): a guide for community & faith-based organizations & leaders. Flu.gov website. http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/resources/Pubs/seasonal_flu_gd.pdf. Updated 2015. Accessed May 18, 2015. **9.** Key facts about seasonal flu vaccine. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website. <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm>. Updated 2015. Accessed May 27, 2015.