

# Developing a Local Flu Vaccination Strategy for the Roanoke City & Alleghany Health Districts

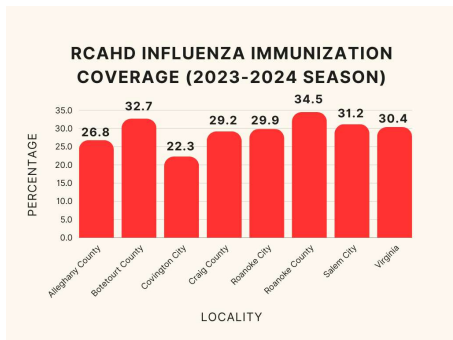
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## Background:

- Roanoke City & Alleghany Health Districts (RCAHD) have been administering **fewer** influenza vaccinations in recent years during their on-site and off-site clinics
- **Widespread availability** of influenza vaccination services in doctors' offices, retail health clinics (pharmacy/store), and workplaces has expanded vaccine accessibility for those with health insurance in the health districts
- Under the ACA's preventive health services coverage mandate, health plans are required to cover the cost of ACIP recommended vaccines, which includes the influenza vaccine



## PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS DOCUMENT

For the Roanoke City & Alleghany Health Districts:

1. Develop an **influenza vaccine alert/reminder system** for integration into the forthcoming Electronic Health Record (EHR) to improve uptake among the health districts' existing clients
  - a. Facilitating a successful text campaign could include adding a **phone number release form** to the health department clinic intake paperwork & the opportunity for text message recipients to schedule appointments online
  - b. Aims to increase demand for immunization services
2. Ensure Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) staff **compliance with the WIC program's role in supporting immunization activities** - when staffing capacity allows - by ensuring that parents/caregivers receive appropriate information about the influenza vaccination for their child
  - a. Recommend piloting a partnership with WIC clinics by providing an opportunity for WIC participants and their household contacts **to receive their seasonal influenza vaccination at WIC sites**
    - i. Based on interventions recommended by The Community Preventive Services Task Force (1) to increase immunization rates among WIC participants
3. Partner with an existing immunization coalition (e.g. ImmunizeVA) to recruit community immunization partners interested in establishing a **community influenza immunization coalition**
  - a. Objective of the coalition would be to create a **multisectoral collaboration strategy to address low influenza vaccination coverage** in the health districts
4. Equip community health workers (CHWs) and public health nurses (PHNs) with **communication strategies** to promote influenza immunization in their communities and patient populations respectively through **outreach & awareness advocacy**
  - i. Aligns with the **Public Health 3.0 framework** (2016), which prioritizes expanding the scope of public health practice through meaningful engagement with community partners to more comprehensively address **health equity** at the population level (4)
  - ii. Seeks to elevate the responsibility of public health agencies in **assuring the provision of influenza vaccinations** through community partner collaboration & mobilization (2)

## SOURCES

1. [Vaccination: Programs in WIC Settings | The Community Guide](#)
2. [From service revision to function based performance - perspectives on public health systems from the USA and beyond - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)
3. [IMC/ChW-PIH-3.0-Review-Final-2024.pdf](#)
4. [Peer Reviewed: Public Health 3.0: A Call to Action for Public Health to Meet the Challenges of the 21st Century - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)

\*VHS data based on Influenza Vaccination Doses Administered ([Virginia Respiratory Immunization Dashboards - Epidemiology](#))

## Outputs:

- Conducted a **literature review** on the barriers to influenza vaccine uptake
- Examined the existing influenza vaccination approach undertaken by the health districts
  - Consulted with a neighboring health districts to inquire about their strategies
- Developed guidelines to **facilitate the prioritization of vaccinating target populations & assuring the provision of influenza vaccination services through community partnerships**
- Crafted an **evidence-based recommendations document** for the health districts with supplemental interventions

A sign used by the health department during the COVID-19 pandemic



Visited the Covington City Health Department

Accompanied the RCAHD nurse supervisor to a local news station for an interview regarding back-to-school vaccinations



## Acknowledgements:

Many thanks to my wonderful supervisor, Mary Kate Bowser, DNP, MS, RN and RCAHD Health Director, Dr. Cynthia Morrow for their insightful guidance & knowledge.

My appreciation also extends to the entirety of the RCAHD team for making me feel like part of their family over these last 10 weeks & the VDH Internship Academy team for their support.

## Notable Experiences & Takeaways:

- Shadowed public health nurses as they provided Family Planning, STI, Immunization and Newcomer Health services to clients at the Roanoke City Health Department
- Learned about the **significance of maintaining partnerships with the media** to communicate pertinent public health information to the public
- Attended weekly **Strategic Implementation Team meetings** with RCAHD Administration where current procedures, processes, and proposed strategies **were evaluated for alignment with the agency's mission** & considered for their resource and equity implications
  - Packaged period product kits with MRC volunteers for the health districts and their community partners
  - Accompanied the RCAHD nurse manager to a **community partner health services advisory committee**
  - Grasped the importance of **prioritizing innovative community partnerships** to more effectively leverage resources toward advancing health equity
- Visited a local federally-qualified health center (FQHC) in Roanoke City to **discuss opportunities to more optimally serve target populations** through service coordination between the respective organizations
- Recognized the significance of a successful **marketing strategy** to increase community and targeted population awareness of the resources & services offered through the local health department
- Fulfilled personal internship program goal to obtain a more **comprehensive understanding of local public health**