MLC-2 in Kansas
West Central Public Health Initiative (WCPHI)

Five counties:
Gove, Logan, Ness, Sheridan and Trego

Serving a population of nearly 14,207

Influenza Vaccination QI Team Members:
Cindy Mullen – Regional Coordinator

QI County Leaders:
Cheryl Goetz & Maxine Litson – Gove
Georgetta Schoenfeld & Rhonda Sperber – Logan
Sharon Anderson & Arlene Langer – Ness
Melanie Cooper & Heather Bracht –Sheridan
Diana Parke & Nicole Mattheyer – Trego

Quality Improvement Story Board

Act | Plan
Check | Do

Plan

1. Understand the system and select the team

How did we know there was an opportunity?
- Team brainstorming
- The anecdotal information gathered during conversations with nurses and other local health departments' staff suggested that influenza vaccination rates are too low in the West Central region.

Initiative participants:
- One regional coordinator and two staff members from each of the five participating counties

Considered problems previously identified in:
- Evaluation of data gathered for the region from 2004 to 2006
- The regional vaccination rate is lower than CDC recommendation that all children ages 6 to 59 months should receive influenza vaccine yearly

2. Define the opportunity

Problem statement:
Influenza vaccination rates for children ages 6 months to 59 months in the West Central public health region are too low.

Primary clients/stakeholders and their needs:
- Residents of the West Central region, specifically parents of children in the target population, need public health information regarding influenza vaccination.
- Local health departments (LHD) staff and managers need Quality Improvement (QI) training and technical assistance, such as how to abstract influenza vaccination data.
- Local health departments, day care providers, child care licensing surveyors, preschools, school districts, Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, physician offices, WIC, and Head Start need educational materials for patients and professionals.

3. Study the current situation

The following data collection tools were used to gather baseline data for the project:
- PHClinic (public health clinic management software)
- KSWebIZ (Kansas immunization registry)

Through collected data, the team identified low influenza vaccination rates (less than 50 percent in each county) in 6- to 59-month-old children in the region:
- Analyzed maps of current processes to determine areas of improvement
- Participated in the region's QI workshop on July 18, 2007

4. Analyze the causes

After conducting an initial root cause analysis (Fishbone Diagram) of the possible reasons for the low influenza vaccination rates in the region, the team found that an overlapping issue in various categories was lack of parent knowledge/ education regarding influenza vaccination.

Root causes of low influenza vaccination rates in 6- to 59-month-old children:
- Information about the flu vaccine for children ages 6 to 59 months is not readily available for the public.
- Physicians are not recommending influenza vaccine for children of all ages.
- LHDs have not previously directed efforts to educate parents and providers about the vaccine.
- The region does not have uniform, printed materials about the flu vaccine.

Fishbone Diagram: Why are influenza vaccination rates low?

Education
- Let parents know that vaccine "pain" is only temporary and will protect the child through flu season
- Educate doctors and staff of the importance of immunizations
- Docs don't know statistics and data — they don't know how low the rates are
- Information is not readily available to the public

Resources
- Parents get upset about late arrival of flu vaccine and go elsewhere to be vaccinated
- Parents of children ages 6 to 59 months don't understand the importance of immunizations
- Opportunities are missed if vaccine is not available
- Lack of adequate supplies are on hand
- Educate parents/caregivers about importance of being vaccinated
- Population will lose confidence if point of distribution is advertised and no vaccine is available
- Parents don't weigh pros and cons between vaccinating and not vaccinating

Working with County Commission

Physician support and coordination
- Physicians and health departments need to be on the same page:
  • start vaccinations at same time
  • encourage vaccinations to specified age range

Other Physician Issues

Influenza vaccination rates for children ages 6 to 59 months in the West Central public health region are too low.
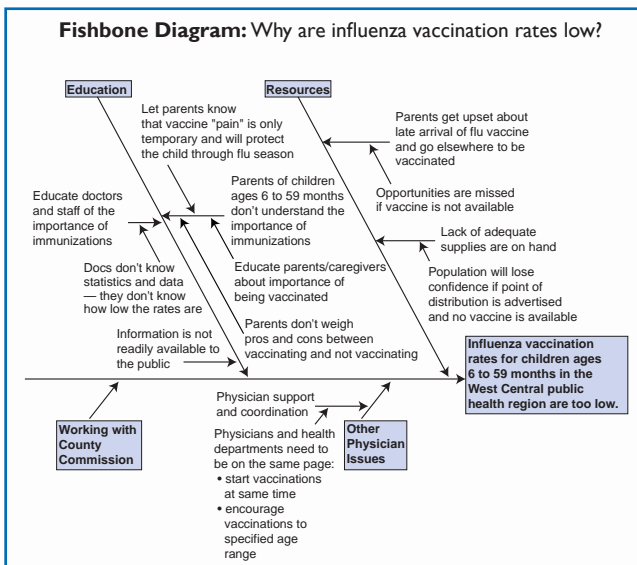
- Conduct public information campaign:
  - Run various advertisements in each local county newspaper
  - Run public service announcements on area radio stations

Check

Project results:
- By the end of the project period, there was an increase of 62 percent over the previous three year average for the months of October and November in the number of 6- to 59-month-old children vaccinated (see chart below).
  - Increased collaboration between local health departments, day care providers, child care licensing surveyors, preschools, school districts, Kansas Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, physician offices, WIC and Head Start
- Started learning how to extract data from multiple sources in the region and the possibilities of extracting data for other purposes

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Act

1. Standardize the improvement
- Continue to use PHClinic and KSWebIZ to look at all immunizations, including flu vaccination
- Continue to educate and promote the importance of flu vaccination to the target population prior to each flu season
- Continue to foster collaboration between LHDs and physicians offices
- Continue to utilize QI tools in day-to-day activities

2. Reflect and establish future plans
- QI will be expanded to other areas of the region
- Continue familiarizing LHD staff with QI concepts, tools and methods

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Do

Select and implement a theory for improvement

Activities:
- Pull up information and statistics about the flu
- Review evidence and recommendations for increasing influenza vaccination rates
- Calculate type and quantity of vaccine necessary
- Order vaccine
- Identify locations suitable for outreach activities
- Select and print campaign materials (posters and fact sheets) from the CDC Flu Gallery
- Distribute print campaign materials to health care clinics, elementary schools, hospitals, health departments, day cares and preschools
- Create postcards to send directly to all targeted families

Influenza Vaccination Counts from West Central Region, October–November, 2004–2007

62% increase

Y-axis: Influenza Vaccinations (0–160)
X-axis (County): Gove, Logan, Ness, Sheridan, Trego, Regional Total

Legend:
- 3 year average for Oct.–Nov. (2004–2006)
- Oct.–Nov. 2007