

Hawaii National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) Activities Report April and May 2009

The focus of this year's NIIW activities was to educate the community about the importance of infant and early childhood immunizations. A variety of activities were implemented in collaboration with community partners. Activities included a community event, news release, newsletter articles, distribution of materials, and interactive activities through various venues.

The Hawaii State Department of Health partnered with the Hawaii Immunization Coalition to staff a booth at the YMCA Healthy Kids Day event on Saturday, April 18, 2009 as a lead into NIIW. Approximately 3,000 people attended the event. A locally written and produced immunization coloring book, *Amy Immunosaurus*, was featured as the children's activity. Finger puppets were cut out from the coloring book for children to color and wear at the event. Over 300 copies of the coloring books were distributed and parents were asked to read the story of *Amy Immunosaurus* to their children at home. Two locally produced brochures, *What Every Family Should Know About Shots and Keep Your Preteen Up-to-Date, Vaccinate!*, were distributed to parents along with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) handout, *Recommended Immunizations for Babies*. Magnets and buttons with the message, *Immunize Every Keiki by Age 2*, were also available. A laptop continually played CDC and Immunization Action Coalition videos throughout the day.

Web banners and buttons available on the CDC NIIW website were utilized by two websites frequented by the public. The NIIW button was placed on the Hawaii State Department of Health website and was linked to the CDC NIIW website. In addition, the NIIW banner was placed on Hawaii Medical Service Association's (HMSA) home page and linked to the insurer's immunization web pages.

The Hawaii State Department of Health issued a news release about NIIW on Friday, April 24, 2009. It focused on the recent increase in pertussis cases throughout the nation and in Hawaii, and the importance of infant immunizations.

Articles detailing the importance of infant immunizations were placed in newsletters distributed statewide. A short article was developed for several Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) Program newsletters distributed to members enrolled in Hawaii's Medicaid waiver program, QUEST. Most programs were able to incorporate portions of the article into their mail outs. Another article for staff of social service and health agencies was distributed through the Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition listserv, reaching approximately 250 members. Good Beginnings Alliance disseminated a NIIW article to 50 Council members, 20 staff, and 350 people subscribing to their *Connections* newsletter. In addition, an article on immunizations was included in HMSA's newsletter which was distributed to 51,000 households statewide.

During NIIW, immunization materials were distributed to the public by community partners and organizations. Ohana Health Plan distributed 400+ handouts with EPSDT screening and immunization information. Summerlin Life and Health Company distributed immunization handouts to 120 members and 30 providers. AlohaCare staff visited 10 providers, including all of the community health centers on Oahu. Each provider received two keiki immunization posters and 2 NIIW posters from the CDC. Coloring books and boxes of crayons were also distributed. At Kunia Walmart, approximately 200-250 bags containing coloring books, crayons, immunization schedules/information, AlohaCare band-aid packs, and a few other giveaways were distributed.

NIIW activities included a story hour by the family services coordinator for Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Health Services. She shared the book, *The Germ Patrol All About Shots for Tots...and Big Kids, Too!*, with 13 children (ages 5 – 12). The coordinator led a discussion about immunizations and the children shared their vaccination experiences. She also reviewed the importance of immunizations as part of the Family Group curriculum and provided brochures from the DOH Immunization Branch.

Additional ideas generated during the first NIIW brainstorming meeting were not feasible this year due to limited time and resources but may be considered when planning next year's NIIW activities. Ideas included: distributing information to healthcare providers through grand rounds and toolkits; involving additional community health centers and other agencies serving communities; and sharing information with the public via community forums and the use of internet resources such as videos on the Immunization Action Coalition website and e-cards developed by the CDC. In addition, the infant committee of the Hawaii Immunization Coalition is currently in its early stages of coalescing and could play a more central role next year.

This year, the extent of numerous activities and distribution of materials were made possible because of participating partners. Involving more partners and starting the planning process earlier next year will increase the reach of the immunization message.