

## Flu Vaccination Challenge 2008-2009 Results Report Card

### About *The Flu Vaccination Challenge*

Joint Commission Resources (JCR) launched the *Flu Vaccination Challenge* in 2008 to help increase flu vaccinations among health care workers and to help decrease the risk of passing seasonal flu to patients. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), all health care workers should be vaccinated to help decrease the risk of spreading the flu to patients. JCR states that health care workers are not just doctors and nurses; they are defined as all people who provide care, treatment and services within health care organizations. However, in recent years, flu vaccination rates among health care workers have remained low.

According to the CDC, “The best way to prevent the flu is by getting a flu vaccination each year.” The CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends an annual flu vaccination for a number of groups, including people 50 years of age or older, women who will be pregnant during flu season, patients who are at risk for serious complications from flu, **and health care workers**. All health care workers should help protect themselves from getting influenza, and help prevent transmission of influenza to their patients, coworkers, family members and close contacts.

### The Survey

In 2008, JCR conducted outreach to hospitals across the country to secure their participation in the *Flu Vaccination Challenge*. Of the 1,700 hospitals that participated, 1,190 submitted complete results. The below data are based on 1,190 hospital participants. Data were collected from the hospitals from August 2008 to May 2009. Note, the data are self-reported by each participating hospital and are not a standardized study of all U.S. health care workers.\*

### Results At-A-Glance

For the 2008/2009 flu season, JCR challenged hospitals across the country to achieve flu vaccination rates among their staff that surpass a national survey from 2005/2006 showing a 42 percent vaccination rate.† The data reported by the participating hospitals showed that:

- More than 1,700 hospitals – including at least one hospital from each of the 50 states – participated in the Flu Vaccination Challenge.\*
- **With help from the Flu Vaccination Challenge, an impressive 1.1 million health care workers received the seasonal flu vaccine.**
- Additionally, 94 percent of participating hospitals met “the Challenge,” achieving a flu vaccination rate of 43 percent or more.
- Approximately 78 percent of participating hospitals increased their health care workers flu vaccination rate from the previous year.

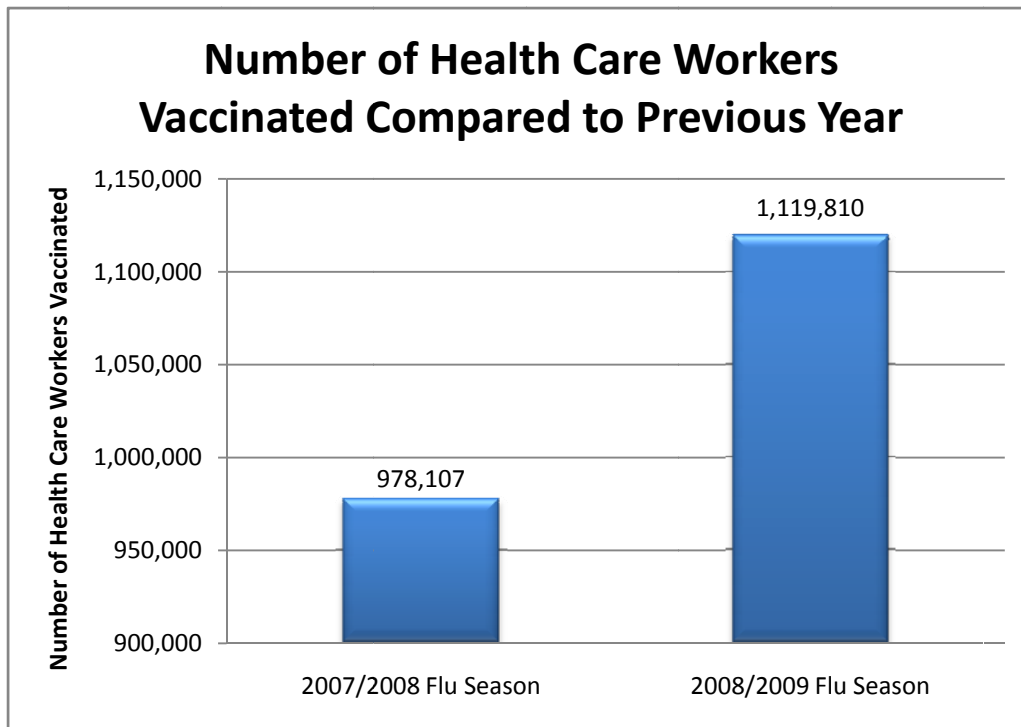


Figure 1: In conjunction with the Flu Vaccination Challenge, more than 1.1 million health care workers were vaccinated in the 2008-2009 season, a large increase over the previous year.\*

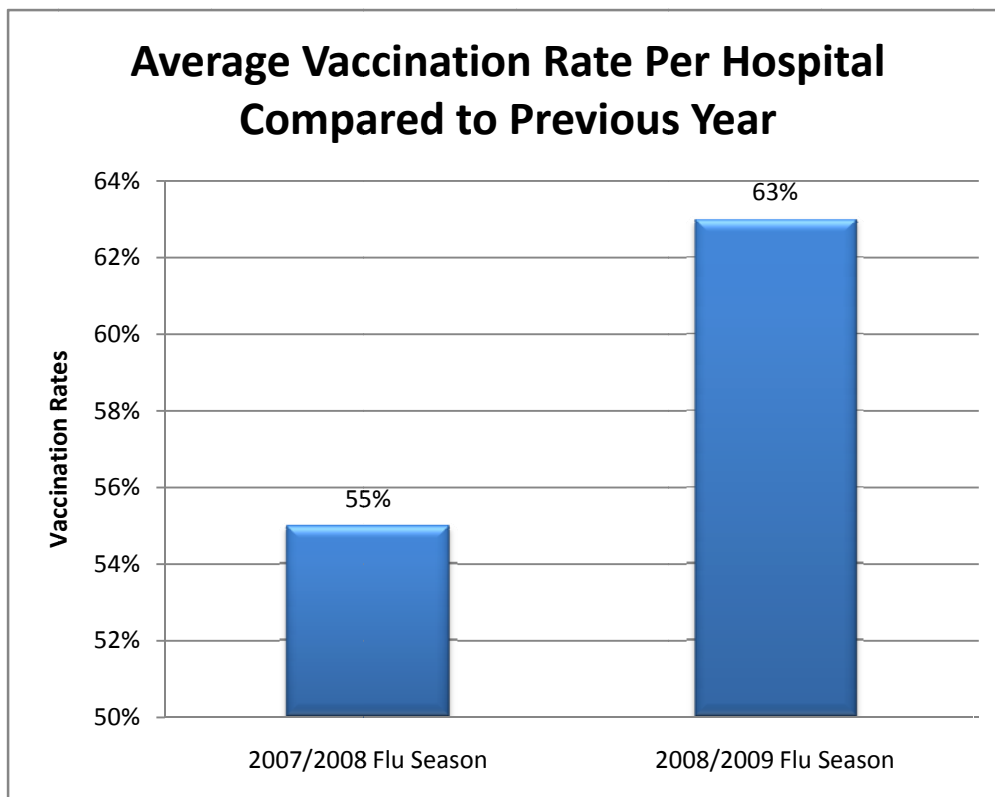


Figure 2: In 2007-2008, the average reported vaccination rate per hospital was 55 percent. With the Flu Vaccination Challenge, that number increased to an average of 63 percent.\*

## The 2009/2010 Flu Vaccination Challenge: Raising the Bar

While the 2008 results are impressive, millions of health care workers in the U.S. are still not being vaccinated. In fact:

- While the majority of hospitals met “the Challenge,” **37 percent of health care workers among the participating hospitals remained unprotected against the flu.**
- In past years, flu infections have been documented in health care settings and studies have shown that health care workers were a potential source of these infections.

This year, JCR is focusing on improvement of seasonal flu vaccination rates within the facility. Therefore, this year’s Challenge will have three tiers of achievement, encouraging a **65, 75 or 90 percent vaccination rate** for the 2009/2010 flu season. The goals were determined by evaluating last year’s results and recognizing that most participating hospitals surpassed the national flu vaccination rate. Data will be collected from August 2009-March 2010.

Most importantly, JCR wants to emphasize that health care workers are more than just doctors and nurses; they are defined as all people who provide care, treatment and services within health care organizations. This year’s Challenge will also include ambulatory and long-term care facilities, emphasizing the importance of seasonal flu vaccination and patient safety beyond the hospital setting.

## About Seasonal Flu

Seasonal flu is a contagious and potentially deadly infection. Flu viruses are mainly spread from person to person via droplets from coughing or sneezing. Transmission may also occur through direct or indirect contact, such as when touching something already laden with the flu virus, then touching the eyes, nose or mouth.

Every year in the U.S., on average:

- Up to 20 percent of the population is infected with the flu
- More than 200,000 hospitalizations occur each year as a result of flu complications
- Approximately 36,000 persons die each year from flu complications

## About Joint Commission Resources

Joint Commission Resources, Inc. (JCR), a not-for-profit affiliate of The Joint Commission, has been designated by The Joint Commission to publish publications and multimedia products. JCR reproduces and distributes these materials under license from The Joint Commission. JCR educational programs and publications support the accreditation activities of The Joint Commission, but are separate functions. Attendees at JCR educational programs and purchasers of JCR publications receive no special consideration or treatment in, or confidential information about, the accreditation process. Learn more about Joint Commission Resources at [www.jcrinc.com](http://www.jcrinc.com).

*Joint Commission Resources received funding and other support from GlaxoSmithKline for the Flu Vaccination Challenge initiative.*

###

\* The data is self-reported by each participating hospital and is not a standardized study of all U.S. health care workers.

† Results from a national survey during the 2005-2006 influenza season; N=833