

# COLLEGE and UNIVERSITY FLU VACCINATION CHALLENGE: 2017-18



## ARE YOUR STUDENTS PROTECTED?

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) encourage college health centers, medical practices, health departments, pharmacists, and other immunization providers to routinely assess the vaccine needs of their young adult patients and make a strong recommendation for vaccination.

You are in a unique position to help spread the word about recommended vaccines for college-age students and other adults affiliated with your institution, and MDHHS would like your help. The materials in this toolkit will assist you in promoting the importance of annual flu vaccination to adults, specifically focusing on students.

College/university students are at risk of contracting the flu due to lifestyle factors. Close contact such as dorms, classrooms, public transportation, parties, and sports events make flu especially easy to spread at college. Further, lack of sleep, not eating healthy, and not exercising regularly can weaken the immune system, making these young adults more vulnerable to the flu.




## ARE YOU UP FOR THE CHALLENGE?

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While reaching the college/university student population with important health messages can be difficult to do, it's critical that we protect them from the flu.

MDHHS would like to challenge you to ramp up your flu vaccination efforts this season!



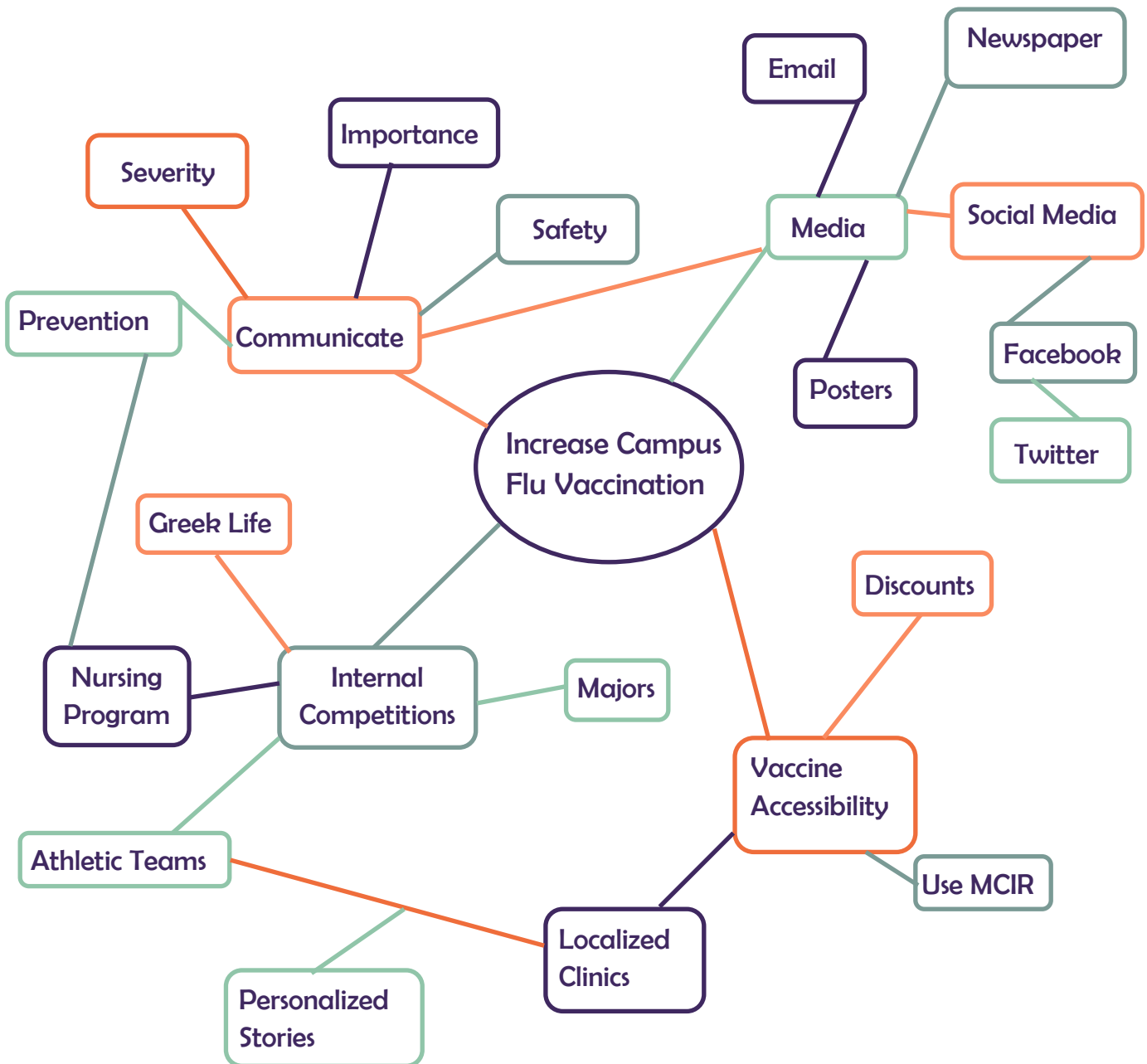
Join MDHHS and Alana's Foundation in a friendly competition this fall, to challenge students to get vaccinated against the flu.

Please use these materials to drive demand for flu vaccine at your campus today! If you have any questions, contact Jalyn Ingalls, Influenza Outreach Coordinator at [IngallsJ@michigan.gov](mailto:IngallsJ@michigan.gov).

### By the numbers..

- **13.0%** of people aged 18-24 were vaccinated against the flu in 2016-17 (MCIR data).
- **#1** Best way to prevent the flu is getting the flu vaccine!

We understand that persuading people to change their health behaviors can be challenging. However, annual flu vaccination is an important preventive behavior that we want people continuing throughout their lifetime. Use the resources in this toolkit to create awareness on your campus and **map out a plan** for your institution. Pick and choose the ideas that work best for your school!





This toolkit can be used as a working document to plan and implement a flu campaign that is unique to your institution and student body. We have left space for you to use to write in thoughts and ideas, and map out your challenge.

### **Step 1: Gather your Team**

Get together with a group of partners. Use the map on the left to brainstorm who would be good team members (e.g. Greek life members, communications team, student health and wellness, nursing program contacts, resident life, etc.). Make sure to engage your students as well to help spread the word about the competition!

### **Step 2: Create a Plan**

Using the toolkit to guide your plan, lay out exactly what steps you are going to take to increase vaccination coverage. There are many ideas, but we know that not all of them are feasible for you. Pick a few ideas that work for your institution, and execute them well.

### **Step 3: Assign Tasks**

While you have your team together, divide the plan into tasks for each person and set deadlines for people to stick to. Check in regularly with teammates to ensure accountability.

### **Step 4: Implement & Monitor**

Monitor how things are going as your team makes progress. If something isn't working, change it. Individualizing your plan to your campus will produce the best results. Remember, the way to win the challenge trophy is to get students talking about the flu and taking the survey!

### **Step 5: Increase Vaccination Coverage on Campus!**

The overall goal of this campaign is to increase vaccination coverage and create a healthier campus. Focus on the outcome!

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## Strategies for Partnering with Groups on Campus



- Greek Life:** Fraternities and Sororities on campus can be great resources to help spread the word to a large campus population. Contact your campus Panhellenic Council about communication channels you can use to reach all Greek students.
  - Nursing School/Public Health:** Does your campus have a nursing program or public health degree? You can work with these schools to host clinics, train nurses on how to give vaccines, or have them communicate within their circles the importance of vaccination (see case study 1).
  - Communications:** Do you have a contact in the Communications department at your school? Reach out to them find out how to engage students through current campus communication and public relations initiatives. There may also be someone on the Communications team who knows how to reach students through social media. You could reach a lot of students by working with the Communications team to post on the college/university-wide social media pages.
  - Animal Shelter:** Do you have an animal shelter in your community? Bring in dogs for a “stress relieving” visit for students who love animals. Coincide this with a flu clinic at your health center so you can educate students while they pet and play.
  - Incentives:** Providing incentives to student groups you work with on campus can be very motivating. They will respond to raffles for gift cards, iPads, sporting event tickets, etc. Often, grants to purchase these incentives are available through various corporations.
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The Community Toolbox website provides resources for campaign design, implementation and evaluation. If you are interested in learning a new skill this website is a great start. You can learn about:

[Assessing Community Needs and Resources](#)

[Communications to Promote Interest](#)

[Creating and Maintaining Partnerships](#)

## Strategies for Clinical Updates and Processes

- Standing Orders:** Use standing orders to create vaccine-only visits. This way, the student does not need an individualized physician order for his/her vaccination. Standing orders authorize nurses and pharmacists to administer vaccines to all persons meeting certain criteria. Standing orders include:
  - a. Protocol to identify patients
  - b. Procedures to provide information on the risks and benefits of vaccines
  - c. Process to record refusals or contraindications
  - d. Approved vaccine delivery protocol
  - e. Quality assurance and documentation procedures
- Notify Patients:** Send reminder/recall letters to patients through the Michigan Care Improvement Registry (MCIR). Reminder/recall is a proven strategy to increasing immunization coverage levels (see case study 2).
- Use Every Opportunity:** Use all patient encounters as opportunities to vaccinate, including sick and well visits. Mild acute illness with or without fever is not a contraindication to flu vaccination.
- Track Progress:** Tracking your progress can be beneficial in multiple ways. Having data to describe how well efforts worked can be useful as you plan for future years. Also, having information on successes and failures can allow you to adapt your strategies and provide feedback to necessary partners.
- Pharmacies:** Is there a pharmacy close to campus that students go to often? Make sure to talk to them about the challenge, provide them with materials, and encourage them to enter all flu vaccinations administered in MCIR.



Here are resources that you can use for implementing standing orders and sending reminders:

- ⇒ Templates for Standing Orders: <http://www.immunize.org/standing-orders/>
- ⇒ Tips sheets for conducting reminder/recall: <http://www.immunize.org/standing-orders/>




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## Strategies for Internal Competitions

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- Greek Life:** Fraternities and Sororities on campus can be great resources to help create an internal competition. There is a natural rivalry between different houses, so use this rivalry to get all Greek life students vaccinated! Work with the Panhellenic council to work out details of how you are going to monitor and evaluate the outcome.
  
- Athletic Teams:** Athletes are competitive, and love the chance to win. Build a flu vaccination competition between athletic teams on your campus, and work with coaches and staff to measure how many athletes get vaccinated. Athletes make up a significant portion of students, and are great leaders to engage in helping spread the word about the importance of flu vaccine. A flu shot can help keep students-athletes in the game!
  - Majors/Schools:** Do you have contacts with Deans from different majors at your school? If so, start a competition between majors. These groups of students take classes together, study together, and research together. This provides an opportunity to communicate with a large group of students at once. Students do not have time to be sick—a flu shot can help keep them healthy!
  - Campus Organizations:** Connecting with on-campus groups can help your message reach a large number of students without reaching out to them individually. Also, be thinking about what support you need. A student in communication, health education, or another major might be interested in an internship opportunity focused on implementing some of these ideas, and spreading the word about the importance of flu vaccine.



A report by the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases highlights campus flu vaccination efforts across the United States . If you would like to read about national efforts, and ways to overcome barriers please read this report. Michigan's College Flu Challenge efforts are highlighted in this report: [Addressing the Challenges of Influenza Vaccination on US College Campuses: A report by the national Foundation for Infectious Diseases.](#)

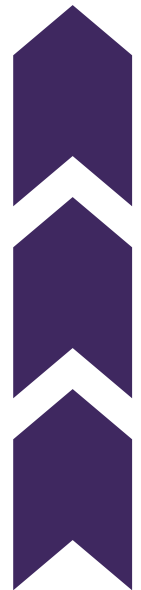




## Strategies for Improving Vaccine Accessibility



- Host Clinics:** Why make students come to you for their flu vaccine? Set up a clinic at a major event (e.g. welcome back events, sporting events, popular study areas, dining areas, etc.) to make it more convenient for students to get their flu vaccine.
- Reduce Financial Barriers:** Students will not want to pay out of pocket, so be prepared to help finance the flu vaccine for students. Have a system in place to bill multiple health plans to ensure a variety of health care insurance providers are accepted at your facility. You can also provide the option to bill vaccines administered at your facility to students' university accounts. For grant assistance, please see the box below.
- Easy Scheduling:** Designate a specific clinic room or area for flu vaccine administration appointments and walk-ins.
- Recommend Vaccines:** Recommend influenza vaccine to your patients! A health care provider's recommendation to vaccinate has a significant influence on patients. You can also give the flu vaccine with other needed immunizations, such as tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap), human papillomavirus (HPV), meningococcal vaccines (MenACWY, MenB), or others (see case study 4).
- Schedule around classes:** If possible, schedule around student class times and schedules, and offer a variety of clinic times, including nights and weekends. Clinics scheduled between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm may not be ideal timing for students (see case study 7).




### Alana's Foundation Vaccine Assistance Grants:

If you are a college or university that needs assistance purchasing vaccine for your underinsured or uninsured students, please go to [www.alanasfoundation.org](http://www.alanasfoundation.org). Alana's Foundation is pleased to offer vaccine assistance grants to the registered schools participating in the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services College and University Influenza Vaccination Challenge.

## Strategies for Communicating Health Messages

- Email Blasts:** Partner with your university relation's team to send blast e-mails to students. This is a great exercise to practice emergency communications messaging capabilities. Use this opportunity to share information about the flu, the flu challenge requirements, why students should get vaccinated, where they can get vaccinated, and address cost issues for people who have questions about out-of-pocket expenses.
- Newspaper:** Does your school have a newsletter or newspaper that is distributed to all students? If so, find out what it takes to write an article for one of these publications and get the message out there about the flu challenge and what students need to do to participate (and win!).
- Use Online Resources:** Utilize credible videos and websites to create awareness about flu vaccine. Share these widely. For example, you could use the *Moms Know Best* public service announcement (PSA), developed through an external collaboration during the pilot year of the flu vaccination challenge. View the PSA here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Itb4RfTrmlc>.



- Posters:** Utilize existing print materials from MDHHS and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to promote flu vaccination across your campus. Many excellent resources are downloadable and free to use. Hanging up posters around campus and in your health center can help reach students and bring their attention to the importance of the flu vaccine and the flu challenge (see case studies 3 & 5).

- Engage Resident Assistants (RAs):** RAs across campus update bulletin boards in residence halls. Provide them with posters and information that they can use to decorate their boards during the flu season.

CDC has free resources available at [www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/).

- ⇒ Print Materials
- ⇒ Video/Audio Visual
- ⇒ Mobile Content
- ⇒ Web Tools



## Messages to Communicate



**Vaccination is the first and most important step to protect against the flu.** Everyone aged 6 months and older should get a flu vaccination each year to protect themselves and their loved ones against the flu.

**The flu is serious.** The flu is a contagious disease which affects the lungs and can lead to serious illness, including pneumonia. Even healthy people can get sick enough to miss work or school for a significant amount of time or even be hospitalized. The close-contact environment that college students live in can often lead to the rapid spread of influenza, so it is important for students to get their flu shot.

**The flu vaccine cannot give you the flu.** The vaccine is either made with an inactivated virus, or no virus at all. The most common side effects from a flu shot are a sore arm and sometimes a low fever or achiness. If you do experience them at all, these side effects are mild and short-lived.

Flu seasons are unpredictable. They can begin early in the fall and last late into the spring. **As long as flu is in the community, it's not too late to get vaccinated, even during the winter.** If you miss getting your flu vaccine in the fall, make it a New Year's resolution— flu season doesn't usually peak until January or February and can last until May. The flu vaccine offers protection for you all season long.

**The minor pain of a flu shot is nothing compared to the suffering that can be caused by the flu.** The flu can make you very sick for several days, send you to the hospital, or worse. The flu shot can keep you from catching the flu. So, any discomfort you may feel from the flu vaccine is worth it to avoid the flu.

**Flu vaccines are safe.** Flu vaccines have been given for more than 50 years and they have a very good safety track record. Hundreds of millions of flu vaccines have been given safely.

MDHHS: [www.michigan.gov/flu](http://www.michigan.gov/flu) (“flu gallery”) or [www.aimtoolkit.org/health-care/general-public.php](http://www.aimtoolkit.org/health-care/general-public.php)

New York State Health Department: [www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/influenza/seasonal/educational\\_materials.htm](http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/influenza/seasonal/educational_materials.htm)

Immunization Action Coalition: [www.immunize.org/handouts/influenza-vaccines.asp](http://www.immunize.org/handouts/influenza-vaccines.asp)



## Strategies for Social Media



- Engage Campus Leaders:** Campus leaders such as the President, football coach, or school mascot can have a large social media reach. Ask them to tweet about the flu challenge or provide them with a sample message they can post or tweet to help encourage students to get vaccinated.

*“Don’t miss the action this season! #GetVaccinated to #FightFlu”*

- Engage Greek Life:** Student leaders in Greek life also can have a huge social media reach. Asking them to post about the flu challenge can spread the word to a large group of students.

- Hashtags:** Create a hashtag that is specific to your campus and the flu challenge. You want consistency among posts about the flu challenge so branding a hashtag that is specific to your school will help increase usage of the hashtag (see case study 6).

- Engage Users:** Create a selfie competition on your campus and have students send in selfies of places they go after they got their flu shot. The most creative post can win a prize! Or you could give those who receive the flu vaccine on campus special Band-Aids that they can use in their selfies to help spread awareness about the importance!

- Utilize Interns:** This would be a great project for an intern to work on. They know what their peers are reading on social media, and can help craft creative posts that will resonate with students on your campus.



CDC has many examples of how you can use social media to engage users for your health campaigns. Their website has many ideas that you can use, or adapt specifically for your campus flu vaccination campaign. Get creative!

<http://www.cdc.gov/socialmedia/>

[Social Media Toolkit](#)

## Sample Social Media Posts

Flu vaccine is now available! Make your appointment at [your health center's website] and stop by health services to #GetVaccinated

The best defense is a good offense. #GetVaccinated to #Fightflu

College #lifehack: Get your flu vaccine early to provide you with protection the entire season #Fightflu

Studies show immunity decreases as stress increases...let flu be one less worry during the semester #GetVaccinated

Even healthy young adults can get sick with a vaccine-preventable disease. Listen to personal stories at: <http://shotbyshot.org/tag/young-adult/>

Spread love. Not the flu. #GetVaccinated

The flu vaccine is the best way to prevent the flu. #GetVaccinated

There is nothing better than beating [rival school]. Help us beat the [rival schools mascot] by getting your flu vaccine! #GetVaccinated

Finals are just around the corner, don't let flu keep you from your finals #GetVaccinated

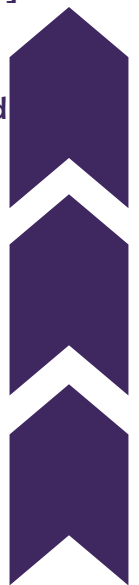
Are you competing? Help us beat our rivals by getting the flu shot today!  
#GetVaccinated

Write in your own ideas here!

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CDC and the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) are currently hosting a Thunderclap campaign to coincide with the annual flu season kick-off on September 29, 2016. Please join us in this #Fightflu initiative by access the Thunderclap here: <http://thndr.me/W8aJFu>. The link will take you to the #Fightflu Thunderclap campaign and ask you to support through your Facebook or Twitter account. You can choose to participate any time between now and September 29 at 10:30am EST.

## Use Personal Stories

### **A Personal Story by Niko Yakšich, Brother of Alana Yakšich:**

#### How did the flu impact you personally?

In 2003, I lost my sister Alana to the flu. She was a perfectly healthy 5-year-old girl, and in the blink of an eye she was gone.

The day she passed away she had woken up with a fever and was feeling a little under the weather. By the end of the day she was feeling much better and was running around with me. It was as though she had never been feeling under the weather and she was back to normal. She was not back to normal though.

As I slept that night my sister was being rushed to the hospital with a fever of 105. The doctors said that there was nothing they could do and that the flu had caused swelling to her brain. By the following night I had lost my sister and my family's life would be changed forever.

#### Why is it important for college-aged young adults to get vaccinated?

I think it's important for everyone to get vaccinated. The flu vaccine is made from dead or weakened viruses, which means that it can not cause the flu.

More than 200,000 people nationwide are hospitalized each year from the flu and an average of 23,600 die. This is something that needs to be taken seriously. Getting vaccinated can prevent you from dying or getting sick. What benefits does not getting vaccinated serve? Why flirt with death when there is a simple and easy way to prevent it?

#### What would you say to people that think the flu isn't serious?

I think that my story shows just how serious the flu can be. My sister did not have previous problems with her health. She was a perfectly normal 5-year-old. This virus can kill and it can kill fast. You need to get vaccinated to prevent the same thing that happened to my family from happening to you. No one should have to go through the pain and tragedy that a loss like this brings on.



Alana's Foundation has partnered with MDHHS for the College Flu Challenge for the past three years. Their team promotes and raise awareness about the importance of the flu vaccine, and use their personal story to help spread the word, and encourage people to get the flu vaccine. If you want to read more about Alana's Foundation, please see their website: [www.alanasfoundation.org](http://www.alanasfoundation.org).

#### Alana's Foundation Vaccine Assistance Grants

If you are a college or university that needs assistance purchasing vaccine for your underinsured or uninsured students, Alana's Foundation is pleased to offer [vaccine assistance grants](#) to the registered schools participating in the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services College and University Flu Vaccination Challenge. Contact Alana's Foundation for program specifics.

## Statewide Resources

Michigan Flu Website: [www.michigan.gov/flu](http://www.michigan.gov/flu)

[MDHHS College Flu Challenge Website](#)


[MDHHS Patient Educational Posters](#)

[MDHHS Resources for Extending the Flu Vaccination Season](#)

[MDHHS 2016-17 Season Materials for Health Care Personnel](#)

[FluBytes Newsletter](#)

[MI Flu Focus Surveillance Newsletter](#)



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## Reaching Off-Campus Adults

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Email Blasts: Partner with your alumni development team to send blast e-mails to alumni. Use this opportunity to share information about the flu, the flu challenge requirements, why people should get vaccinated, where they can get vaccinated, and address cost issues for people who have questions about out-of-pocket expenses.

Newspaper: Does your school have a newsletter or newspaper that is distributed to all alumni? If so, find out what it takes to write an article for one of these publications and get the message out there about the flu challenge and what alumni need to do to participate (and win!).

Use Flyers: Faculty and staff spend a lot of time in campus buildings, particularly the classrooms they teach in and their offices. Find places to hang flyers across campus, and make sure it is highlighted that faculty and staff can participate. Working with program staff to distribute information to faculty could also be an effective way to share information across campus. There are many excellent print resources that are downloadable and free to use.



Sporting Events: You can reach a broad range of people by sharing information about the Flu Challenge at sporting events. Work with your athletic department to hang posters during games, or include advertisements about it on scoreboards and other highly visible areas. If your school is willing, you could include the challenge information on the back of all tickets to people who will see the information, and have access to the link after the game.

Homecoming: Campus is packed with people during homecoming events. Find a way to advertise the flu challenge during these events. The parade, the game, the social events, the informational materials—there are a lot of opportunities to reach a wide audience during homecoming.


MDHHS has a document available that provide resources for helping adult clients pay for vaccines.

[Helping Your Adult Clients Pay for Vaccines](#)


Similarly, the CDC provides information on finding and paying for adult vaccines.

[Finding and Paying for Vaccines](#)






## Reaching Off-Campus Adults



Nearby Businesses and Organizations: Do you know businesses or organizations that have been routine supporters of your institution? Work with their human resources to send information about the flu challenge. Remember, even fans can complete the self-report survey as long as they report on behalf of one institution.

Athletic Alumni: Many coaches keep lists of their alumni contact information to share information about season tickets, team clothing they can order, or other seasonal updates. See if you can get them to include a brief blurb about the flu challenge in their emails to alumni.

Website: Update your health center's website to include information about the flu challenge, including a direct link to the self-report survey. You can also work with your institutions communication team to see if you can get information about the flu challenge on the main institution page as well. This is a highly visible site that likely gets a lot of traffic from students, staff, faculty, alumni and fans.



Word of Mouth: Encourage people to spread the word about the flu challenge. As virtually anyone can submit a self-report survey (as long as they haven't already submitted a self-report survey on behalf of another school!), word of mouth can be a highly effective way to get more people vaccinated, and more surveys submitted on behalf of your school.

Social Media: Make sure that alumni, staff, faculty, and fans are part of your target audience for social media posts. If you are working with your institution's communication team to get information on the website, you could also ask about sharing social media posts throughout the campaign that focus on different target audiences.

As you are contacting people (alumni) who are not close to campus, you may want to provide information about where to get flu vaccine. Refer them to the HealthMap Vaccine Finder. This can be used to find healthcare providers any where in the United States who will provide the flu vaccine, and other vaccines.

[HealthMap Vaccine Finder](#)



Mapping out your exact plans will help keep you on track throughout the flu season. You can use this timeline to set deadlines and goals for your campus flu vaccine campaign this year!



**Brainstorming Stage:**

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- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_



**Planning Stage:**

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Goals:

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Implementation Stage:

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Evaluation Stage

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## Case Studies

### 1. Calvin College: Nursing Students as Campus Advocates

Calvin College engaged nursing students to be influencers on campus, and they also used it as a training opportunity. “Nursing students helped provide flu shots at each flu clinic as a part of their clinical skills course.” They also invited friends to the clinics, and were campus advocates for the flu shot.

### 2. Wayne State University: EHR Utilization

Wayne State University used their electronic health system to alert staff to ask every patient who came in about getting the flu vaccine. This EHR acted as a reminder for staff to ask about flu vaccine so that no one would forget to ask the student if they had received the vaccine yet. Using clinical strategies to optimize processes can be an effective way to increase the number of students getting vaccinated.

### 3. Hope College: Branding and Marketing Flu Vaccine Efforts

Hope College branded their flu campaign “Flunado”, and created posters that read “Stop Flunado: Get vaccinated now!” By creating a theme for their efforts to vaccinate students, they help create awareness around the challenge, and were consistent in their messaging. These posters also included information about an incentive they were offering to students: a drawing to win one of four Fitbits for any student who got their flu vaccine. Incentivizing students can be an effective way to get more students into health clinics to get their flu shot. Also consistent messaging is important. Using branding terms such as “Flunado” can help with recognition of the campaign, and awareness of the efforts on campus.

### 4. Michigan State University: Support Vaccination Staff

Michigan State University incentivized their staff to vaccinate more students with the flu shot. The person on staff who had the most flu vaccinations in the season won a prize. This strategy can encourage staff to make a recommendation for the flu vaccine to every student who uses the clinic’s services. There are many ways to encourage students to get the flu vaccine— clinic staff are partners you will want to engage!

## **5. Wayne State University: Posters that Encourage Competition**

Wayne State University created their own marketing materials that encouraged the competition between schools who were participating in the challenge. It is a good idea to create posters that are specific to campus activities, which show that efforts were made to personalize the campaign which will interest more students. The poster that Wayne State University created included information about completing the student self report survey. Not all students who receive their flu shot will get them at the college health clinic, so it is a good idea to market the self-report survey on posters and other materials so that all students can complete the survey and have their flu shot count towards the overall competition!

## **6. Penn State University: Social Media Campaign**

Penn State University was not a part of the Michigan College Flu Challenge, but they have a great social media campaign for flu vaccination. They use the hashtag #PSUFluFight. Personalizing the hashtag specifically to your campus will help to engage more students. Penn State also encouraged students to take selfies to post with the hashtag, and challenge friends through social media to get the flu vaccine.

## **7. University of Minnesota: Guinness World Record**

University of Minnesota was not a part of the Michigan College Flu Challenge, but they have challenged students to get vaccinated to help break the Guinness World Record (2008) for the highest number of vaccinations in one day, which led to over 11,000 vaccinations. They also use the idea of students being a part of the herd, and talk about protecting the herd by getting the flu vaccine.

The College and University Flu Vaccination Challenge is hosted by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, and Alana's Foundation. All questions can be directed to [ingallsj@michigan.gov](mailto:ingallsj@michigan.gov).  
[Michigan College and University Flu Vaccination Challenge Website](#)

