

Vaccination Program Boosts Employee Productivity

Each flu season employees across the country either call in sick, or worse, show up sick. Companies are getting smart by offering flu shots at work to keep workers healthy and flu-free.

July 2011

BY TRUDIE MITSCHANG

Businesses hoping to maintain healthy productivity levels this flu season are advised to consider establishing a flu vaccination program. Health experts agree that an annual flu shot is the single best way to stay flu-free, and having access to flu shots at work gives people one less excuse for not getting vaccinated.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 5 to 20 percent of the United States population (15 to 60 million people) catch the flu each year. To address this problem, flu vaccine guidelines have changed; the CDC now recommends that everyone aged 6 months and older get a seasonal flu vaccine. Working adults are especially urged to comply, since their ability to spread the virus is enhanced by their daily contact with others.

“No business is immune to the flu – a workplace epidemic could wipe out a labor force during its busiest season and devastate a company’s bottom line,” says Dr. Jeffrey Greiff, founder of Flu Busters, a leading preventive healthcare provider for companies of all sizes. “Many workers won’t get a flu shot because of the perceived time and energy it takes. On-site preventive services bring immunizations to employees.”

Flu season starts in October and lasts until March, but can continue into spring. Yearly flu vaccinations typically begin in late September and continue throughout the flu season. For employers, planning flu clinics in fall and early winter makes good business sense.

A study published in the New England Journal of Medicine found that healthy workers who had been vaccinated against the flu reported 43 percent fewer sick days and 44 percent fewer doctor visits as a result of upper-respiratory illnesses. “With flu season right around the corner, businesses need to begin employee vaccination plans now,” says Greiff. “By investing in employees’ health, businesses can save countless dollars in lost productivity, insurance and other health care costs.”

Companies wanting to implement an employee flu program are advised to consider a third-party immunization provider that will allow employees to be vaccinated at or near their place of employment. This makes the whole process convenient for workers and employers.

People of any age or health condition can catch the flu, which is much more serious than the common cold. Symptoms of flu include high fever, muscle aches, headache, extreme tiredness, sore throat, cough and congestion. Each year, thousands are hospitalized due to health complications stemming from the flu. The flu is highly contagious and can be easily spread in the workplace, especially since an infected person can be contagious five days before symptoms even appear. Planning a workplace flu clinic is one of the smartest and most cost-effective decisions a business can make to keep all employees healthy and productivity levels high.

vaxAmerica
now it's easy!