

INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION

70% of Valley seniors receive influenza immunizations. More progress needed to meet 90% goal.

Definition:

This indicator shows the percentage of people age 65 and older who reported receiving an influenza (flu) shot in 2001.

Why is it important?

- Influenza is one of the most common and deadly diseases affecting people age 65 and older in the United States and result in an average of 110,000 hospitalizations and more than 18,000 deaths in persons 65 years of age and over each year.¹⁶
- Influenza vaccines can prevent up to 60% of hospitalizations and up to 80% of deaths from influenza-related complications.¹⁷

More about Influenza Immunization:

- Medicare has covered the cost of influenza immunizations since 1993.
- Influenza immunizations are typically widely available in clinics, drugstores, health fairs, and senior centers throughout the flu season.
- Influenza immunization rates are significantly lower among African American and Latino adults than for white adults.

How are we doing?

The Central Valley has a slightly higher (better) percentage of adults age 65 years and older who reported receiving an influenza immunization in 2001 (70%) when compared to adults in the San Francisco Bay Area (69%), California (67%), and the Los Angeles Region (64%). However, to meet the National Healthy People 2010 Objective, 110,000 more seniors need to be immunized in the Central Valley.

The North Valley and the San Joaquin Valley had rates of immunized older adults (72% and 66%, respectively) much lower than the Sacramento Metropolitan Area at 77%. When compared to all counties in the Central Valley, El Dorado County has the

highest (best) percentage of older adults who reported receiving an influenza immunization in the past 12 months (81%). At the other end of the spectrum, Kings and Merced counties had the lowest rates at 58%. Fifteen of the counties experience higher rates than those of the Los Angeles Region and thirteen fare better than the statewide rate.

Note: See page 37 for more detail.

