



Mother & Child Health Coalition

Press Release

Contact: Anne Biswell
816.283.6242 Ext. 226

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
June 23, 2009

Hospitals increase rates of healthcare workers immunized against influenza

Kansas City, MO- Liberty Hospital was awarded the first-ever Silver Syringe Award at the Mid America Immunization Coalition (MAIC) Immunization Symposium, held on Friday, June 19th at the Ritz Charles Conference Center in Overland Park, Kansas.

During this past flu season, MAIC partnered with members of the Greater Kansas City Chapter of the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC) to launch a **campaign to raise the rates of health care personnel (HCP) immunized against seasonal flu**. Liberty Hospital was recognized as the area hospital with the greatest increase – going from 50.4% in the 2007/2008 season to 66.8% in 2008/2009 -- up a whopping 16.4%.

“While MAIC’s goal is that all hospitals and medical facilities immunize their total workforce against influenza, the significant increase at Liberty Hospital, along with a 10% increase at North Kansas City Hospital and a 8.5% increase at Excelsior Springs Hospital are great starting points for our campaign,” said Deb Bumgardner, director of Mid America Immunization Coalition. Also competing this year were Menorah, Research Belton, Miami County, Children’s Mercy Hospitals and Clinics and Truman Medical Center Hospitals.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, facilities that employ HCP should provide vaccine to workers by using approaches that have been demonstrated to be effective in increasing vaccination coverage. **Health-care administrators should consider the level of vaccination coverage among HCP to be one measure of a patient safety quality program** and consider obtaining signed declinations from personnel who decline influenza vaccination for reasons other than medical contraindications. Studies have demonstrated that organized campaigns can attain higher rates of vaccination among HCP with moderate effort and by using strategies that increase vaccine acceptance.

Mid America Immunization Coalition is a program of Mother & Child Health Coalition (MCHC). MCHC promotes the health of mothers and children through community planning, education, advocacy and collaboration with organizations addressing infant mortality, immunization, childhood obesity, and child safety. More information about the 2009 Immunization Symposium and/or the Mid America Immunization Coalition is available from Deb Bumgardner at Mother & Child Health Coalition, 6400 Prospect, Suite 216, Kansas City, Missouri, 64132, office phone (816) 283-6242, ext. 244 or on our website, www.mchc.net.

####