

# MemorialCare's Influenza Protection Program

MemorialCare Health System

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# Agenda

- Brief overview of MemorialCare Health System
- What lead us to develop this program
- Program elements
- Metrics



MemorialCare Health System, a not-for-profit integrated delivery system based in California, recognizes the risk to patients, its own staff, and physicians from inadvertent spread of H1N1 or seasonal flu by unvaccinated healthcare workers.

MemorialCare believes it is an ethical imperative to protect all those for whom they care from the flu.

# MemorialCare Health System



**Long Beach Memorial**



**Miller Children's Hospital  
Long Beach**



**Community Hospital  
Long Beach**



**Orange Coast Memorial**



**Saddleback Memorial  
Laguna Hills**



**Saddleback Memorial  
San Clemente**



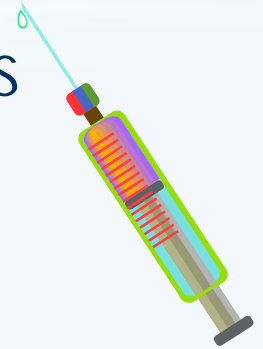
# Just the Facts

|                      |                 |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| Total Assets         | \$2,170,152,000 |
| Total Annual Revenue | \$1,668,628,000 |
| Patient Discharges   | 67,974          |
| Patient Days         | 327,897         |
| ER Visits            | 9,505           |
| Surgeries            | 40,252          |
| Employees            | 10,893          |
| Medical Staff        | 2,418           |



# Influenza Facts

- Influenza causes > 200,000 hospitalizations annually
- Up to 49,000 deaths from influenza
- People with chronic medical conditions, infants, young children, pregnant women and the elderly are most at risk for serious illness and death
- Up to 50 percent of people with influenza have no symptoms, yet can still unknowingly "shed" the virus and be contagious which could thereby transmit flu to others
- Evidence shows that the **best way to prevent flu is by administration of flu vaccine**



# Background

- An atypical H1N1 pandemic in 2009 provided an urgent need to achieve universal vaccination both globally and at MemorialCare
- Spring 2009: MemorialCare established a multi-disciplinary Influenza Task Force with representation from each of its hospitals including patient safety, nursing, infection control, human resources, employee health, and pharmacy and laboratory personnel, as well as physician and senior leadership from the health system level
- The team convened weekly to develop a new approach and continues to meet in response to seasonal needs

# Background

- Vaccination rates of Health Care Personnel (HCPs) estimated in the literature at below 65 percent
- Center for Disease Control (CDC), Society for HealthCare Epidemiology (SHEA), American Academy of pediatrics, American Hospital Association (AHA), have taken the position that mandatory influenza programs are a **core patient and HCP safety** practice







American Hospital  
Association

# *Quality* Advisory

## **AHA Endorses Patient Safety Policies Requiring Influenza Vaccination of Health Care Workers**

*Friday, July 22, 2011*

America's hospitals are committed to protecting the health and well-being of patients and staff. Evidence has emerged over the past few years clearly indicating that health care workers can unintentionally expose patients to seasonal influenza if the workers have not been vaccinated, and that such exposure can be dangerous to vulnerable patients.

To protect the lives and welfare of patients and hospital employees, the American Hospital Association's Board of Trustees recently approved a policy supporting mandatory patient safety policies that require either influenza vaccination or wearing a mask in the presence of patients across health care settings during flu season. This policy aims is to achieve the highest possible level of protection.

## Memorial Care's Mandatory Protection Program

### 2009-10:

Emphasis on patient care staff receiving vaccinations and "floating date" for implementation

### 2011-12:

Required for all staff, physicians, volunteers, students, vendors. Activation date of November 30, 2011 as the implementation date for either receiving the vaccine or wearing a mask while at work

Employees, physicians and volunteers who are unvaccinated will be required to wear a mask while at work **between December 1- March 30, 2012**

# Key Program Elements

- Unanimous policy endorsement by system-wide leadership teams, up to the Governing Board. Collaborative approval from the Medical Executive Committee at each hospital.
  - Because California hospitals cannot employ physicians, this approval enabled the policy to apply equally to physicians.
  - Our System Board members were among the first to receive vaccinations
- Easy access to current and updated influenza information
  - An Influenza Resource Center was created on the MemorialCare intranet to disseminate the policy, public health and vaccination information and helpful tips
  - Staff were trained and a public relations campaign was also rolled out



# Key Program Elements

- Development of a sharing program for vaccine supplies and tiered administration priorities for potential vaccine shortages
- A visual cue of vaccination status to make it easy to see who has and who has not received vaccination:
  - Employees, volunteers, students, and physicians got stickers on their name badges when they got their vaccines

11-12



# Key Program Elements

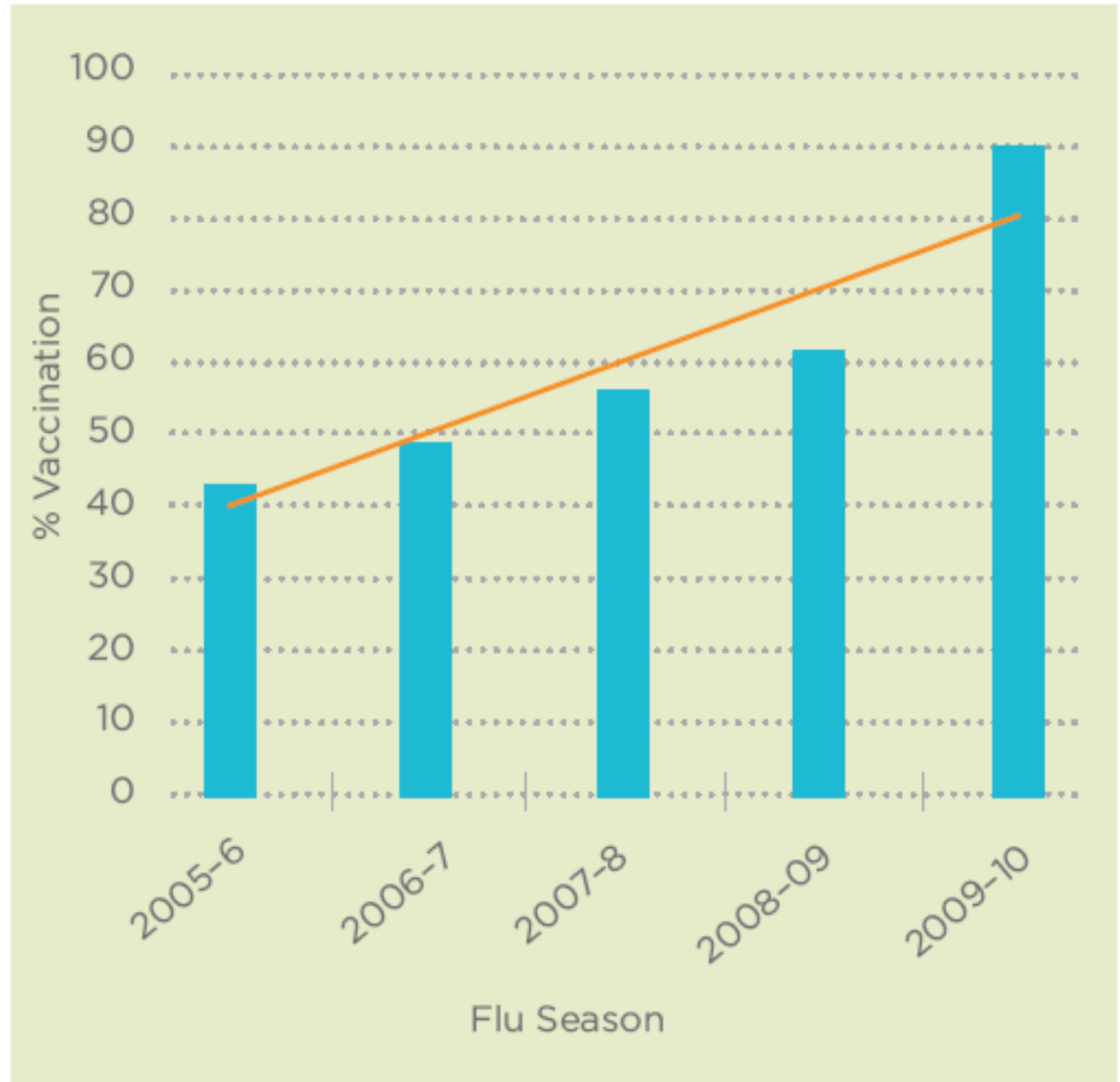
- Guidelines for passive to active visitor screening and real-time education
- Disaster preparedness plans and drills for epidemic and near-epidemic patient influenza levels



After the 2009-10 flu season when the policy began, MemorialCare noted a demonstrable increase in the number of staff receiving vaccinations

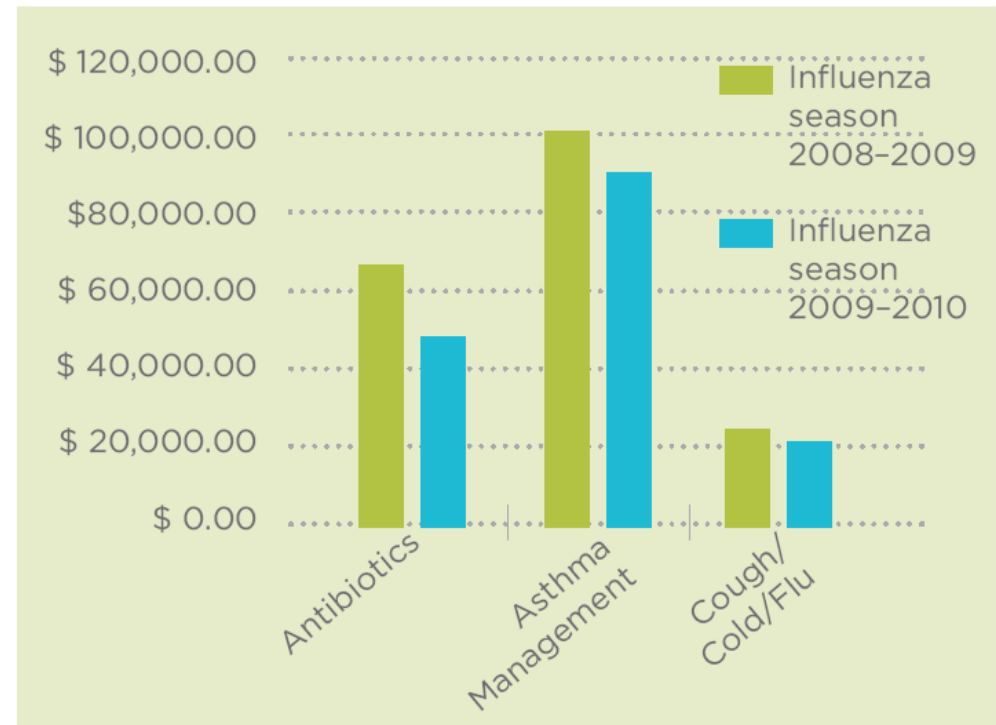
Long Beach Memorial Medical Center and Miller Children's Hospital Long Beach had the highest community rates of flu and exposure risk, and saw **significantly increased vaccination rates up from 62 percent to 90 percent**

## VACCINATION RATE



Higher rates of vaccination resulted in fewer patient care providers/staff getting sick themselves, which then minimized treatment costs, including pharmaceutical claims related to the treatment of viral infections, secondary infections, or complications.

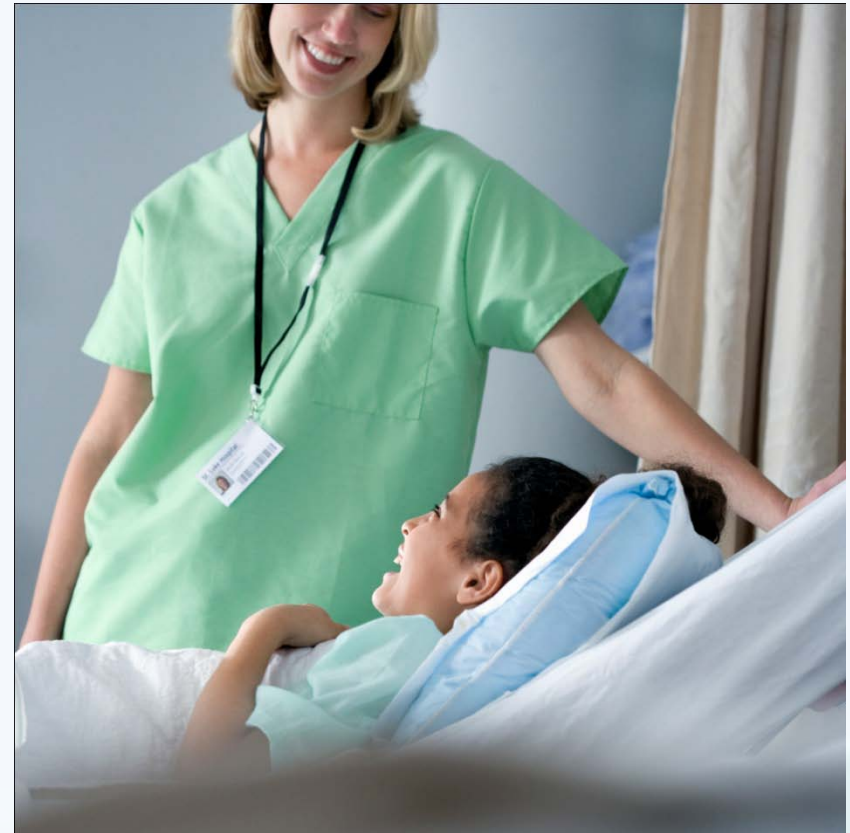
## MEMORIALCARE PHARMACY CLAIMS DATA



From the 2008-09 flu season to the 2009-10 flu season, MemorialCare realized an **18 percent reduction** in influenza-related pharmaceutical costs alone.



Even with near-pandemic levels of influenza in 2009-10 in the Long Beach community, MemorialCare was able to sustain its mission and provide care to all those who needed it without long waits or overcrowding.



- The benefits to the hospital include a sustained reduction in employee absenteeism due to illness, and, as a self-insured organization, the avoidance of health care costs related to influenza and its complications.



# Protecting against Influenza

- Questions?