Tracking Flu in a Large Urban Area

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Harris County Public Health
9th Annual Influenza Surveillance Workshop
August 16, 2016
HCPH and Harris County

- HCPH serves as the county health department for unincorporated Harris County
- Over 700 public health professionals
- Third most populous county in the nation; estimated 4.34 million
  - Approximately 2.2 million in HCPH jurisdiction
- Covers over 1,778 square miles (approximately the size of Rhode Island)
- Geographically, politically, and demographically diverse
Why School-Based Surveillance?

- Children play a key role in the spread of influenza
- Approximately 24% under 15 years, additional 7% 15-19 years
- Of 2.3 million residents, 540,000 are children enrolled in public school
- 86% (18/21) Independent School Districts (ISDs) are in the HCPH jurisdiction
- Strong, long-term relationship with school nurses
- Relationship was vital during flu portal implementation in 2009
Harris County Public Health Flu Portal

- Web-based surveillance tool
  - First implemented in 2009
  - Secure, credentialed

- School nurses voluntarily report daily absenteeism data
  - Faculty, staff, students
  - School enrollment, total absenteeism/due to ILI, clinic visits/due to ILI

- Epidemiologists at HCPH analyze data and create weekly flu summary reports
  - Disseminated to school district health coordinators and made available to the public

- Annual analysis by students/interns
Flu Portal

Healthy people, Healthy communities, a Healthy Harris County

Helpful Resources

- 2010-2011 Flu Season
- It’s Up To You To Stop The Flu
- Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services homepage
- Provider Resources for Conversations with Patients
- CDC Homepage and CDC Flu Site

Flu Form

For Direct Use Only

School

[Select an answer]

Date of Report:

[Select a date]

Please provide daily absenteeism data and your perception of flu activity:

Students Present:

- Students Absent
- Students Absent with ILI

Students Absent:

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3

- Students Absent with ILI by Nurse
- Students Absent with ILI by Nurse

Students Absent by Nurse:

- 0
- 1

Did your school close?

- No
- Yes

# of students with ILI in your school:

- Not Changing

Additional Information:

- Total # of Faculty / Staff
- Faculty absent
- Faculty with ILI

Please share any other findings or comments you may have:

Submit Form
Median Percent Absenteeism in Harris County Schools, 2009-2016

CDC Week

Median Percent

0.00
1.00
2.00
3.00
4.00
5.00
6.00
7.00
8.00
9.00
10.00

40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20


Harris County School-Based Influenza Surveillance Project, Summer 2016
By: Natasha Wahab, MPH Candidate, The University Of Texas School of Public Health

HCPH Priority Public Health Issues for 2013-2018
Selected for the magnitude of the issue and our ability to make progress in Harris County
Mean Percent Absenteeism Due to ILI in Harris County Schools, 2009-2016

Note: Graph excludes ILI-related peak in absenteeism during 2009-2010 CDC weeks 40-41.

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By: Natasha Wahab, MPH Candidate, The University Of Texas School of Public Health
Percentage of Harris County Schools Reporting, 2009-2016

- 238/576 (41.3%) of schools reported data during the 2015-2016 season
- 10/18 (55.6%) independent school districts

Harris County School-Based Influenza Surveillance Project, Summer 2016
By: Natasha Wahab, MPH Candidate, The University Of Texas School of Public Health
Percentage of Harris County Schools Reporting Consistently, 2009-2016

- 153/238 (64.3%) of schools that reported data during the 2015-2016 season did so consistently
- 9/18 (50.0%) independent school districts
Harris County Public Health

{ Vision }
- Healthy People,
- Healthy Communities,
- A Healthy Harris County

{ Values }
- Excellence
- Compassion
- Flexibility
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Professionalism
- Equity

{ Mission }
- Promoting a Health and Safe Community
- Preventing Injury and Illness
- Protecting You

www.hcphtx.org