

# Understanding Ontario pharmacists' personal influenza vaccination rates

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- OBJECTIVES:** Influenza prevention strategies include immunization of health care workers, yet rates among Canadian health care workers are suboptimal at 31% to 56%. In light of these numbers, this study aimed to estimate the rate of personal influenza vaccination among Ontario pharmacists, a group not previously studied, and to characterize those who received the vaccine.
- METHODS:** A survey was distributed electronically in July 2014 to Ontario-based community pharmacists in the Ontario College of Pharmacists database who agreed to participate in research. Survey questions gathered information on respondents' demographics, practice site and certification to administer immunizations. Multivariate logistic regression was used to correlate these characteristics with personal immunization.
- RESULTS:** Of 4239 eligible pharmacists contacted, 780 completed the survey for a response rate of 18.4%. More than two-thirds of respondents (69%) received the flu vaccine during the 2013-2014 flu season. Pharmacists certified to administer the vaccine were nearly 3 times more likely to have received it versus those not certified (adjusted OR 2.84; 95%CI 1.64 to 4.94,  $p < 0.01$ ). Other demographic and practice site characteristics were not associated with receiving the influenza vaccine.
- CONCLUSIONS:** The pharmacist vaccination rate in Ontario, while higher than most reports of other health care worker vaccination rates, remains suboptimal. However, being certified to administer the vaccine is significantly associated with receiving it. Future research should examine pharmacists' reasons for not receiving the vaccine, with the goal of identifying strategies to improve uptake of influenza vaccination in this population.