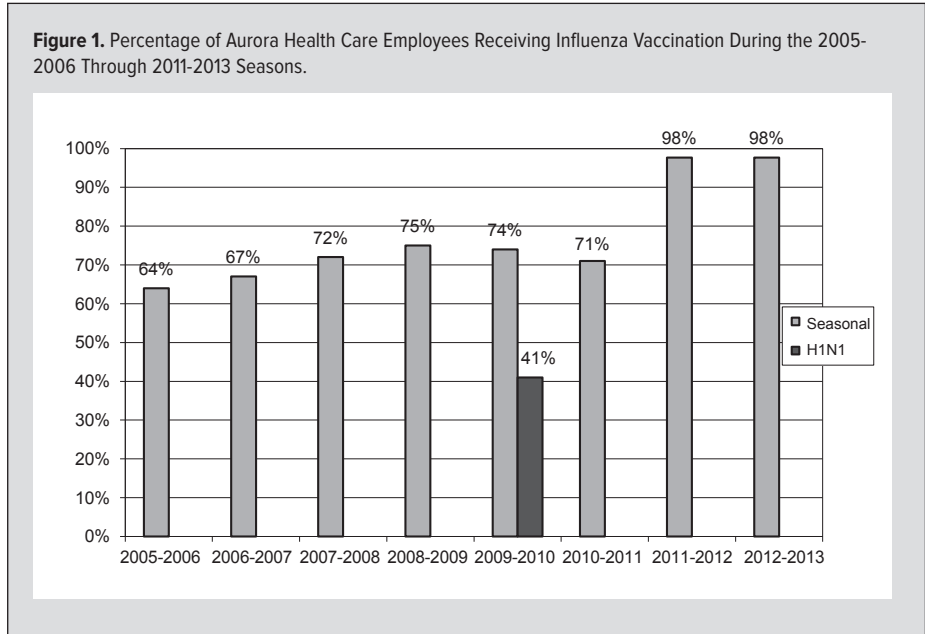


Mandatory Influenza Vaccine for Health Care Workers: 2012 Results

In the April 2012 edition, *WMJ*¹ published the initial results of a mandatory influenza vaccination program for employees of our health system. Many Wisconsin health providers have contacted us regarding our processes and inquired about our 2012 vaccination rates. I wish to share these, to allow health providers to consider this information if they are contemplating changes to their existing influenza vaccination programs.

Our 2012 employee vaccination rate and accepted exemption rates were identical with 2011. We again achieved a 97.7% vaccination rate, vaccinating 28,907 employees (Figure 1). We had a slight increase in medical and religious exemptions in 2012 (509) compared to 2011 (499; $P=0.7$). Voluntary terminations of full-time or part-time employees decreased significantly from 11 to 2 ($P=0.02$).

Two key changes were made in 2012. One was to move the deadline up to November 15, to avoid needing to make last-minute contact with clinicians and staff during the holiday season. This earlier deadline was easily met. The second major change was to add the requirement to credentialed medical staff, even if they were not Aurora employees. This affected over 1000 professionals, many of whom rarely if ever set foot within an Aurora facil-



ity. There were 27 physicians who chose to rescind their medical center privileges rather than provide evidence of vaccination.

The resources required to execute the second year of the vaccination policy were considered to be significantly less than the initial year. We feel the mandatory vaccination program is an acceptable process for us to accomplish our goal of creating a safe environment for patients and employees.

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Reference

1. Smith DR, VanCleave B. Influenza vaccination as a condition of employment for a large regional health care system. *WMJ*. 2012;111(2):68-71. Available at: https://www.wisconsinmedicalsociety.org/_WMS/publications/wmj/pdf/111/2/68.pdf. Accessed January 28, 2013.

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