ABSTRACT

Using ethical reasoning, the importance of why a mandatory requirement for all staff employed within a healthcare institution to obtain an annual influenza virus vaccination as a condition of employment is explored. With a mandatory requirement, it enforces the obligated duty of health care staff, has the potential to protect patients and residents within health care institutions, and reduce financial costs of the health care system.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this research is aimed at providing an understanding to the influenza virus vaccination, and its benefits for both staff, patients and residents. It will identify several reasons why a mandatory requirement for healthcare staff to obtain the influenza vaccination is required. It is important to bring attention to this recurring concern, and bring a common understanding to the vaccination importance. Therefore, it is important to clarify its benefits, and create a requirement for it for healthcare staff, unless medically unable to receive the vaccination.

METHODS

A literature review was conducted to find information related to outcomes in obtaining the influenza vaccination. Articles were gathered from online, and keywords included “influenza,” “vaccination,” “patient outcomes,” “patient safety,” and “healthcare staff.” Sites used to gather information included the National Council for Biotechnology Improvement, Proquest, Canadian Institute for Health Information, Wiley, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and ScienceDirect.

RESULTS

• There was also an increase in health habits and treatment satisfaction with greater trust between individuals involved (Birkhauer et al., 2017).
• With the incorporation of a mandatory influenza virus vaccination for health care workers, it develops public trust and patient safety (Ottenberg et al., 2011).
• When there is a lack of trust between patients and staff within a health care organization, it prevents staff from providing their duty as staff, as patients may not trust their intentions.

• According to the Canadian Institute for Health Information, in 2017 Ontario spent an average of $6,367 per person on health care (“How does health spending differ across provinces and territories?”, n.d.)
• Ontario currently does not have a vaccination requirement for health care staff.
• British Columbia spent an average of $6,321 per person in 2017 British Columbia established a vaccinate-or-mask policy in 2012.
• In 2017, Ontario had a overall 2.7% increase in spending, whereas British Columbia only had a 2.0% increase in spending This is a difference of $46.00/person being spent more in Ontario, than British Columbia.

DISCUSSION

Having a mandatory influenza vaccination for eligible healthcare employees will add to an individual’s duty to provide quality while also improving the trust between employees and those requiring care, patient-centred care, improve patient outcomes, and reduce financial costs to the healthcare system. The Canadian health care system faces some implications when attempting to establish this policy among health care staff. Some staff may not be receptive to change, and enforcement of obtaining a vaccination mandatory for them because they are employees of a health care organization, but not for the general public. Greater awareness and promotion of benefits can assist policy makers in implementing this type of policy within organizations. Enforcement of positive effects that can affect staff members when there is a mandatory policy such as decreased staff absenteeism can reduce the reluctance to obtaining a mandatory influenza virus vaccination.

BENEFICIENCE

Doing good, or being able to balance the benefits of a decision with the risks.

NON-MALEFICENCE

Do the least amount of harm, to obtain a great amount of benefit.