

Influenza Immunization Modules

Since 2006, between January and April of each year as part of the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS), randomly sampled adult (18 years and older) residents of Simcoe Muskoka were asked if they had received a seasonal influenza immunization during the most recent influenza season (i.e. since the previous September). In 2013, approximately 330 of these respondents were also asked about their perception of the effectiveness of seasonal influenza immunization.

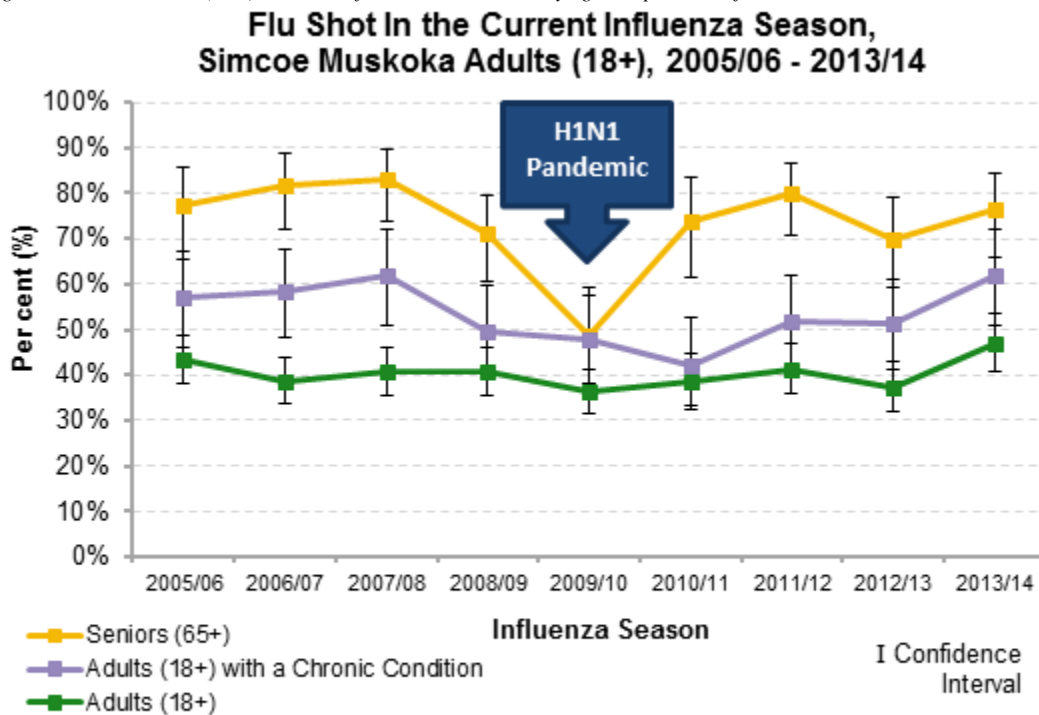
Trend in Seasonal Influenza Immunization

Approximately half (47% (40.8%, 53.5%)) of Simcoe Muskoka adults (18+) reported having had a flu shot during the 2013-2014 flu season. This was significantly higher than the previous flu season where 37% (32.1%, 42.9%) of Simcoe Muskoka adults (18+) reported having a flu shot. This was the first significant increase in reported influenza immunization among the general adult population in the past nine years.

The 2013-2014 flu season had the highest coverage among adults (18+) with a chronic condition important for influenza since the pandemic year (2009-2010) at 62% (50.7%, 72.2%); however, this increase was not statistically significant (likely due to the relatively small sample size).

In 2013-2014 influenza season 76% (65.8%, 84.6%) of Simcoe Muskoka seniors (65+) reported getting their flu shot. Seasonal influenza vaccine coverage among seniors (65+) has not changed significantly since the pandemic year (2009-2010), fluctuating between 70% - 80% (see [figure 1](#)).

Figure 1: Trend in adults (18+) seasonal influenza immunization by age and presence of chronic disease, 2006-2014.



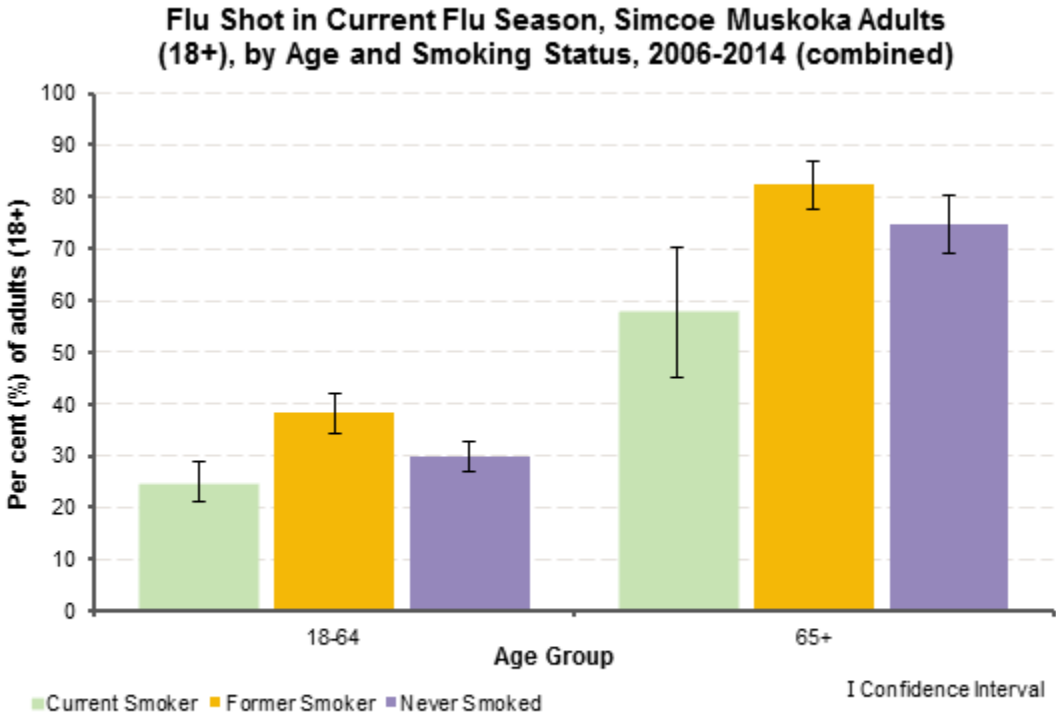
Data Source: Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS), Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, Jan-April for the Years 2006 - 2014; Waves (61-64; 73-76; 85-88) & Cycles (1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16). RRFSS data is collected by the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at York University on behalf of SMDHU.

Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Coverage by Subpopulations

Seasonal influenza vaccination uptake by subpopulation was examined for the past nine years of available data combined (2006 to 2014):

- No significant differences in seasonal influenza immunization coverage were apparent by sex or highest level of education;
- Seasonal influenza immunization coverage increases with age: 22% (19.6%, 25.1%) for adults 18 to 44 years, 39% (36.4%, 42.5%) for adults 45 to 64 year and 77% (73.4%, 79.9%) for seniors 65 years and older;
- Seasonal influenza immunization coverage is significantly higher among those with household income below \$30,000 when compared to those with household income of \$30,000 or higher: 57% (51.8%, 62.8%) vs. 37% (34.7%, 39.4%);
- Seasonal influenza vaccine coverage is significantly lower among current smokers and this is consistent for both younger and older age groups (see [figure 2](#)).

Figure2: Per cent of adults (18+) that report having had a seasonal flu shot in the current flu season by age and smoking status, 2006 to 2014



Data Sources: Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS), Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, 2006-2014 (Jan-Apr only combined); data collected on behalf of the health unit by the ISR, York U

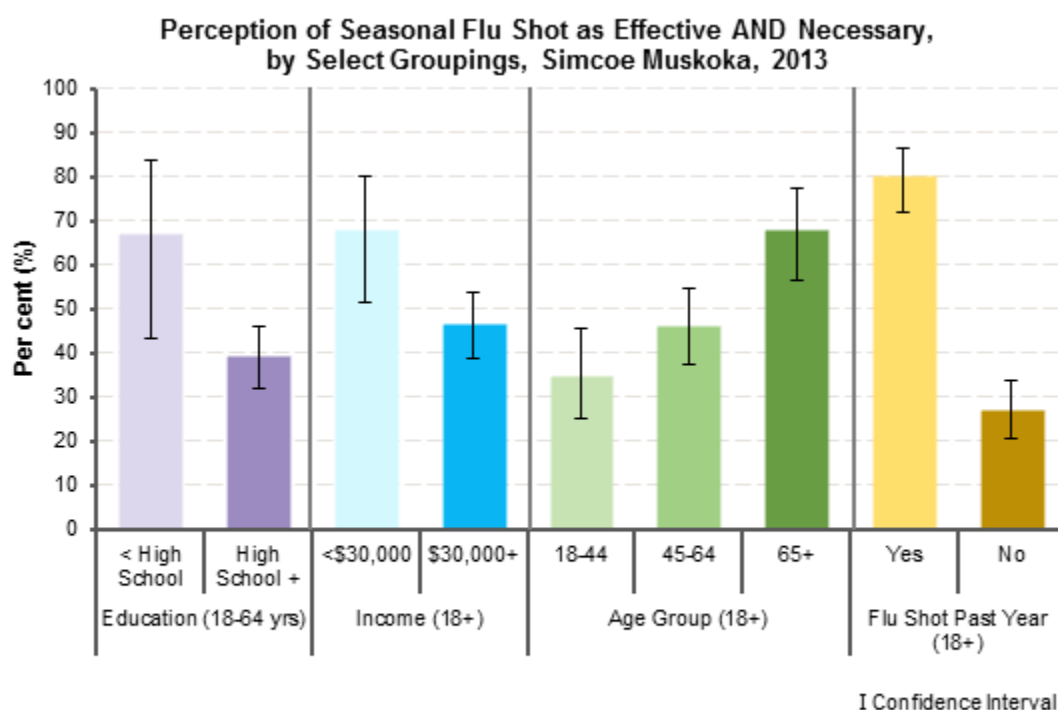
Perceived Effectiveness of Seasonal Influenza Immunization

In 2013 (Jan-Apr), respondents were read the following three statements and were asked to indicate their level of agreement (from strongly agree to strongly disagree):

- i. "The seasonal flu shot keeps people from getting sick with the flu."
- ii. "People that have had their seasonal flu shot are less likely to spread the flu to others."
- iii. "To protect against getting the flu it is important to get the seasonal flu shot each year."

Approximately half (47% (41.3%, 52.8%)) of Simcoe Muskoka adults (18+) agreed (strongly or somewhat) with all three of the above statements about the effectiveness and need for an annual seasonal influenza vaccination. Perception of the seasonal influenza vaccine as effective and necessary didn't vary significantly by gender, but did by: age, income and education. Not surprising, those that reported getting a flu shot in the current flu season perceived it be effective and necessary significantly more than those that did not get the flu shot (see [figure 3](#)).

Figure3: Per cent of adults (18+) perceive the seasonal influenza vaccine as effective and needed annually, RRFSS 2013



Data Sources: Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS), Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, cycle 13 (Jan-Apr, 2013); data collected on behalf of the health unit by the Institute of Social Research, York U