**Subject Line: Destination Vaccination [Retailer Name] − Dispelling Myths about Flu Vaccines**

**Destination Vaccination [Retailer Name]**



Hello [Retailer Name] Champs and Immunizers!

**Every time we connect with a customer during influenza season, we should be asking them to get vaccinated, when appropriate.** But myths about flu shots are common, and dispelling them can be challenging. We want to provide you with some language to help you get through some of those tough conversations. These points will help you more easily convince your customers to get vaccinated against a serious and sometimes deadly disease.

Objection: **I don’t want a flu shot because the last time I got one, I got the flu!**

Response: It is actually impossible to get the flu from the flu shot. Flu shots are made either with viruses that have been killed and are not infectious or with no viruses at all. You might have been infected with the flu virus *before* you got the shot or before the vaccine had a chance to take *effect*. (It can take up to 2 weeks for the flu shot to work.) Every year, many people get really sick from the flu, some are even hospitalized with flu-related complications, and worse, some even die. You *cannot* get the flu from the shot but you *can* get the flu from someone else.1 So, let’s help protect you by getting you a shot today.

Objection: **The flu shot makes me ill.**

Response: The most common reactions to flu vaccine are less severe than the symptoms caused by the actual flu. They include soreness, redness, or swelling at the injection site, which generally lasts 1-2 days.1 Other reactions can include a low-grade fever and muscle aches that are usually mild. Those reactions are certainly not as bad as the potentially severe symptoms of the flu that can last 10 days *or* flu complications that can last even longer.1 You can tough out a sore arm, so let’s get you vaccinated today!

Objection: **I don’t need a shot. I’ve never had the flu!**

Response: Up to 20% of Americans get the flu every year—that’s up to more than 60 million people a year.2 Most people who get influenza will recover between a few days to 2 weeks, but some people will develop complications, some of which can be life-threatening and even result in death. Pneumonia, bronchitis, and sinus and ear infections are examples of complications.3 You’ve been lucky so far, but why take the chance on getting really sick? Let’s do this today, ok?

Objection: **I’m healthy. I don’t need a shot.**

Response: Every year, healthy people get sick and some even die from the flu. And even if you get a mild case, you can still pass the virus on to the people you love and care about, and they can possibly get very sick or die. Older people, young children, pregnant women, and people with medical conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart disease, and lung disease are at especially high risk of developing flu-related complications.4 Even if you don’t get vaccinated to help protect yourself, you may consider getting vaccinated to help prevent spreading the flu to someone you love who may be at a higher risk of complications from the flu. So, are you ready to get your shot?

Objection: **Why would I bother to get a flu shot this year when it didn’t work last year?**

Response: Last year, the flu virus that circulated predominantly and the one contained in the vaccine were not a good match. The CDC reported that getting an influenza vaccine last season reduced a person’s risk of contracting medically attended influenza by 23%. However, even when there’s not a good match, the vaccine still offers some protection. Vaccination may result in milder illness and help prevent serious complications requiring hospitalization. During seasons in which vaccine and circulating strains are well-matched, studies have shown vaccine efficacy of about 70% in young adults.5 However, no matter the degree of match, vaccination is still the single best way to protect against the flu. Based on this information, I would recommend you help protect yourself by getting immunized today.

We hope you find that this language helps you convince more customers to take the most important step toward influenza prevention, which is vaccination. You can also print and use the enclosed *No Excuses* Flyer to help encourage vaccination. Stay tuned for more information to prepare you and your staff to be the **Destination Vaccination** for your customers. If you have questions, please contact [your regional contact].

Sincerely,

[xxx]

Additional Resources:

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/freeresources/general/no-excuses-flu-vaccine.pdf>

**References**: **1.** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Misconceptions about seasonal flu and flu vaccines**.** <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/misconceptions.htm>. **2**. WebMD®. Flu statistics: What are your odds of getting the flu? <http://www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/flu-statistics>. Accessed July 10, 2015. **3.** CDC. Flu symptoms & severity. <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/symptoms.htm>. Accessed July 10, 2015. **4.** CDC. People at high risk of developing flu–related complications. <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/high_risk.htm>. Accessed July 10, 2015. **5.** CDC. Flu vaccine effectiveness: questions and answers for health professionals. <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/vaccination/effectivenessqa.htm>. Accessed July 10, 2015.

MKT29523 7/15