



RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
LANSING

NICK LYON  
DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
December 18, 2017

CONTACT: Angela Minicuci  
(517) 241-2112

**MDHHS announces 2017 College Flu Challenge winners**  
*It's not too late: get the flu vaccine before holiday season*

LANSING, Mich. – The flu vaccine is the number one way to protect against the flu, yet national estimates show that only 44.2 percent of Michiganders received their flu vaccine last year, and only 13 percent of young adults received it according to Michigan Care Improvement Registry data.

To address these low rates, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services partnered with Alana's Foundation for the fourth year in a row to host the College and University Flu Vaccination Challenge. This year, the College Flu Challenge has expanded to include undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, staff, alumni and fans. The Challenge first began in the 2014-15 flu season as a friendly competition between schools to encourage increased flu vaccination rates.

Today, MDHHS announced that Calvin College, Wayne State University, and the University of Michigan are the winners of the 2017-2018 Flu Vaccination Challenge for small, medium, and large-sized schools, respectively. This represents the first win for the University of Michigan, a second win for Calvin College, and a third win for Wayne State University.

The College Flu Challenge ended during [National Influenza Vaccination Week](#). In addition to this challenge, MDHHS is encouraging everyone six months of age and older to get their flu vaccine before the holiday season. In the last three decades, 75 percent of flu seasons peaked between December and February. By getting the flu vaccine now, families will protect themselves and their loved ones against the flu during the holidays and through the duration of the flu season.

“We applaud all colleges and universities for engaging their networks in the effort to protect their students, staff, and families from the flu,” says Dr. Eden Wells, chief medical executive with MDHHS. “Even now in December, there is still plenty of time to benefit from vaccination coverage and to help keep your family healthy before flu activity increases.”

It takes about two weeks after the flu vaccine is administered for the body to build an immunity to the flu. There are multiple flu shot options this season, including two vaccines that are made to create a stronger immune response for adults aged 65 years and older, an egg-free flu vaccine for people with egg allergies, and vaccines that protect against three strains or four strains of the flu. Residents should speak with a healthcare provider about which vaccine is best for them.

Flu vaccines are available at many locations including provider's offices, pharmacies, and local health departments. To find a location near you, visit <http://flushot.healthmap.org>. To stay up-to-date on flu activity in Michigan, visit [www.michigan.gov/flu](http://www.michigan.gov/flu).

###