

BACKGROUNDER: 2022 INFLUENZA STAKEHOLDER SHOWCASE

Civil Society Organizations' Contributions to Influenza Vaccination Advocacy Work in Canada

Each year, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization ([NACI](#)) sets a vaccination target of 80% for influenza immunization for adults aged 65 years and older, adults between 18 and 64 with underlying chronic medical conditions, and health care professionals. High vaccination rates protect those most vulnerable to poor outcomes following infection with influenza (the flu) and help ensure that the health care system does not become overwhelmed. However, influenza vaccination rates remain suboptimal, typically ranging between 62% to 65% every year.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) can be a trusted 'on the ground' source of information for public health policymakers on the barriers that older adults face to receiving their influenza vaccine while also acting as vaccine facilitators by hosting vaccination clinics, reminding members to get vaccinated, or presenting reliable information on the safety of vaccination so that individuals have the information to make an informed decision about their health concerning influenza.

In May 2022 the International Federation on Ageing (IFA) gathered 17 CSOs working for and with older adults in Canada together in a Stakeholder Showcase in order to understand good practices in influenza vaccination advocacy strategies; learn through the exchange of knowledge and assets; consolidate knowledge assets and campaign strategies; and identify gaps that consider how to improve influenza vaccination advocacy campaigns.

Together, participants came to a consensus that vaccine roll-outs must be inclusive and accessible, multi-sector collaboration is needed to promote influenza vaccination, and that a [platform](#) for knowledge exchange between CSOs would be a valuable resource to assist in their vaccination advocacy work.

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The [International Federation on Ageing](#) (IFA) is an international, non-governmental organization (NGO) with a unique membership base comprising government, NGOs, academics, industry, and individuals in over 80 countries. Nearly 50 years old, the IFA has become known as a leading and innovative organization that works across disciplines and sectors toward common goals that improve the lives of older people. Through the IFA's formal relations with the World Health Organization (WHO) and general consultative status at the United Nations and its agencies, the IFA is in the position to advocate directly with member states and contribute to and inform intergovernmental dialogue.