


<b>F R O M</b>	Name & Title	Elouise M. Mayne, R.N. Division Chief of Community Services <i>EM</i>	CITY OF BALTIMORE  <b>MEMO</b>	
	Agency Name & Address	Commission on Aging and Retirement Education (CARE) 10 North Calvert Street, Suite 300, Baltimore, MD 21202 Phone 410-396-1337 Fax 410-244-8516		
	Subject	RE: Council Bill 09-0165R Influenza Outreach to African American and Hispanics		

**To:** President and Members  
Of City Council  
City Hall  
201 N. Holliday Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201

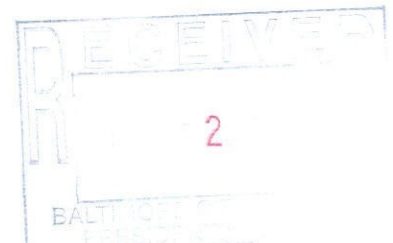
**Date:** October 30, 2009

The Baltimore City Commission on Aging and Retirement Education is the area agency on aging responsible for providing advocacy, support and education to our older adults, their families and caregivers in Baltimore City. CARE's Community Services Division, Health Promotion Program and our Advocacy Division's Information and Assistance program is responsible for providing the community with training education and resource linkage in the community. Education on disease management, prevention and immunizations for our older Baltimoreans is a key part of our outreach efforts.

CARE supports legislative initiatives as well as other forms of advocacy that responds to the needs and well being of our older adult population which may include their families and/or caregivers. Partnership with key organizations in the community is a primary method of getting information out to individuals. In an effort to ensure outreach to all ethnicities, partnerships with faith based organizations, public organization as well as many private non-profits is essential.

According to the CDC "adults age 65 and older comprise 90 percent of deaths that occur each year from complications related to influenza." These alarming statistics emphasize the importance of flu prevention among older adults. Flu immunizations have been shown to greatly reduce the risk of death from influenza complications. As the agency dedicated to supporting older adults through outreach and services, CARE has joined Action for Community Enrichment (ACE coalition) and The Baltimore City Health Department to promote vaccination among older adults. Much of this outreach is coordinated through our senior center programs where many are located in low socio-economic areas of the city and where there are higher incidents of co-morbidity related to chronic illnesses and complications from influenza. However, despite these efforts there are still disproportionate statistics for influenza immunization among minority populations namely African Americans and Hispanic Americans. According to Dr. Rodewald of the CDC "possible reasons for lower vaccination rates among minority patients include misperceptions about the vaccine, distrust of the government and lack of access to health care services, as well as physician beliefs and systemic biases that may inhibit providers from offering the vaccines." In addition, African Americans and Hispanic Americans have higher incidences of risk factors for complications from influenza including diabetes, obesity, and asthma. These risk factors combined with other social factors require increased efforts to immunize our minority older adult population. Our agency will support efforts that better the lives and health of older adults. Therefore, it would be prudent for our agency to support a campaign that will increase the immunization statistics for these underserved older adult populations.

To provide outreach and educational services to the Hispanic community CARE has been working with Assisi House of St Patrick Church and their "Comiendo Juntos" (Eating Together) program which meets twice a month providing senior age Hispanics with a free lunch, education presentations in Spanish, and social activities in St Patrick's Hall. To educate the participants in the Comiendo Juntos program CARE has also partnered with local neighborhood support programs as well as the John Hopkins University's School of Pharmacy which provides outreach and information on the H1N1 virus as well as the Seasonal Flu. Each senior has been provided with a list of Free Flu shot clinics in both English and Spanish. In addition, St Patrick Church hosted a health fair that provided seniors with several screenings and information regarding the flu virus.



The Baltimore City Commission on Aging and Retirement Education supports a resolution for Council Bill 09-0165R for Flu Vaccine Outreach to African Americans and Hispanics in Baltimore City.

Cc: Janie McCullough  
Angela Gibson