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Role of technology: Podcast in influencing respondents to receive a flu shot.

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Background and Problem: Studies have demonstrated that flu shots are an effective method to control flu infection. However, statistics reveal that only about 68% of people get vaccinated in the U.S. every year. We wanted to develop and evaluate an intervention to increase influenza vaccination rate.

Methods: We designed an online survey to determine the reasons for people not receiving a flu shot and sent it a convenience sample of 125 people.

Findings: Thirty four responses were received and 50% (N=17) received the flu shot in the last flu season and 50% (N=17) did not. Those who did not receive a flu shot could choose from a list of reasons and check their top three options. Among respondents who did not receive a flu shot, 65% did not think they could get the flu; 35% stated they either lack of time and/or not thinking about getting a flu shot. 60% of respondents who replied "other" either doubted the effectiveness of the flu shot; did not mind getting the flu or thought they were not in a high risk population.

Intervention Design: Using the Trans Theoretical Model of Change and the survey findings, a podcast was developed to influence people to move from the precontemplation or contemplation stage to the action and maintenance stage. Preliminary results indicate that out of the 10 responses received from a potential 17, 60% (N=6) indicated that they would receive a flu shot after listening to the podcast.

Conclusions and Future Studies: Due to the small sample size, the current data cannot be generalized. Future studies will attempt to expand the sample size by targeting people who have not received the flu shot and also elicit the help of public health professionals to develop the next version of the podcast.