

U.S. Sen. Tom Carper Visits DSU to Highlight Immunizations

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U.S. Sen. Tom Carper teamed up with Delaware State University and the Delaware Division of Public Health to highlight the importance of immunizations as students prepare to go back to school this month.



U.S. Sen. Tom Carper (2nd on left) chats with Government Association executive members (l-r) A. Isaac and Isaiah McCoy and

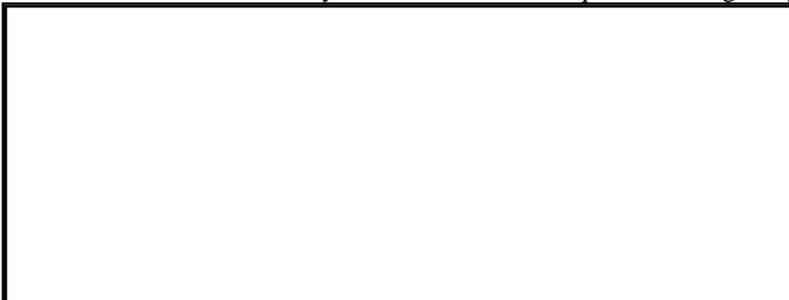
The event, held at DSU's new Wellness Center, a state-of-the-art center that promotes healthy lifestyles among its students, showcased steps parents and students can take to make sure students are ready and healthy to return to school.

"Encouraging students to lead healthy lifestyles are one way parents and educators can instill good lifelong habits," said Sen. Carper. "By preventing illness, we can also decrease time away from school and work and avoid costly doctor and hospital visits. Staying on top of our immunizations is one way we can all get better health care results for less money."

"Immunizations are vital part of preventive care and Delaware has many options for no cost or low cost immunizations for children," said Dr. Karyl Rattay, Delaware Division of Public Health Director. "Thank you to Senator Carper and Delaware State University for raising awareness that immunizations are smart medicine."

According to Marianne Carter, director of the DSU-based Delaware Center for Health Promotion, "Being up-to-date with immunizations is an essential requirement for staying healthy. It's far better to prevent illness than to treat it after the fact."

"Because a safe and healthy campus is one of our top priorities at Delaware State University, we follow the standard vaccination guidelines to ensure that our students have had or receive the recommended immunizations," said Dr. Alton Thompson, provost and vice president of Academic Affairs at DSU, which has more than 4,100 students. "Our University health officials work hard to review the immunization history of each student and require them to get any necessary vaccinations they might have missed."





Michelle Fisher, director of DSU Student Health Services; Provost Alton Thompson; Dr. Martin Luta, chief of the Communicable Diseases Bureau (state Div. of Public Health); U.S. Sen. Tom Carper; Kristin Trout, Wellness and Rec. Ctr. coordinator; and Marianne Carter, director of the Delaware Center for Health Promotions, get together after the event.

According to the American College Health Association, vaccine preventable diseases continue to occur on college campus. “This creates an opportunity and challenge for colleges and universities,” said Michelle Fisher, director of the DSU Student Health Services. “It creates an opportunity to promote health and educate students on the importance of keeping their immunizations up to date, while it also creates a challenge to put practice in place to monitor immunization compliance, to keep abreast of current health care recommendations, and to regularly monitor disease trends.”

Ms. Fisher added that her health services staff at DSU does a good job at meeting those challenges.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, everyone age 6 months and older needs a seasonal flu shot every year. Here are some other shots people need at different ages:

Young children:

- Children under age 6 get a series of shots to protect against measles, polio, chicken pox, and hepatitis among others.

Pre-teens and teens:

- Pre-teens need shots at age 11 or 12 to help protect them from tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough, meningitis, and HPV (human papillomavirus).
- Teens need a booster shot at age 16 to help protect them from meningitis.

Adults:

- All adults need a booster shot every 10 years to protect against tetanus and diphtheria.
- People age 65 or older need a one-time pneumonia shot.
- Talk to your doctor or nurse about which shots you and your family need.

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