

School name: New Futures School

Area Of science: Microbiology

Project Title: Can we improve our current Influenza vaccine and cover more influenza strains?

Influenza is a very contagious disease that spreads across the United States. Any one can catch it and is very dangerous to infants, small children, people over 65 years, and pregnant mothers. Although we do have an Influenza (flu) vaccines that cover 4 strains, many people still catch other strains that we have not developed a vaccine for. That discourages people from vaccinating against the flu. We also have the flu mist that is a nasal spray flu vaccine. The current flu vaccine reduces the chance of getting the flu by 50% to 60% for only the strains that the vaccine covers. We plan on modeling how many people reported got the flu vaccine and how many people were laboratory confirmed with the flu. We also plan to model what strains were spreading the most through the year. Can we also predict what will be the most common flu virus for the following year? Can we cover more strains of the flu for a more effective Flu vaccine?

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