

Tallahassee.com

Kenneth Brummel-Smith: Let pharmacies help to improve seniors' health

Kenneth Brummel-Smith
My View

As a nationally recognized expert in geriatric health care and education, I find it unfortunate to see Florida fail in expanding efforts to protect its citizens against debilitating illnesses.

An overwhelming majority of states allow qualified pharmacists to administer vaccinations for pneumonia and shingles. Florida does not. Fortunately, legislation this session would put Florida back on track to wellness. HB 509 and SB 850 would allow qualified pharmacists to administer the vaccines for pneumonia and shingles in adult populations.

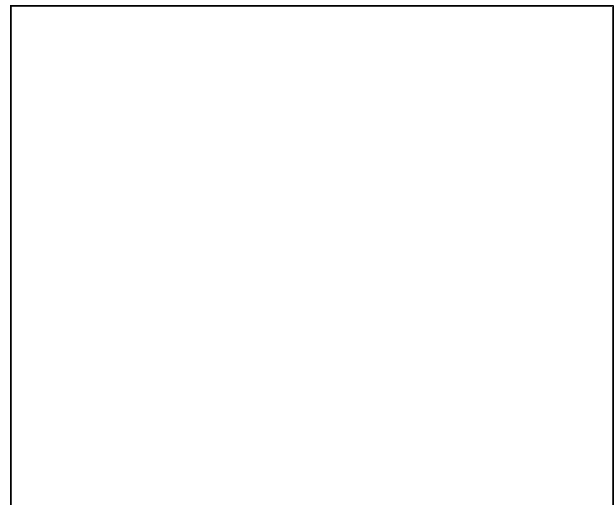
As a past president of the American Geriatrics Society, I can tell you that we need more protection for our seniors. Primary prevention through immunization is the most cost-effective care. All professional medical organizations support immunizations of older people, and the CDC recommends expanding access to them through provision by a wide variety of trained providers.

As a medical doctor, I can tell you our plate is often very full, and I welcome the help of trained pharmacy professionals to assist in reducing the risk of seniors' contracting these illnesses. Pharmacists are often on the front lines of patient health care. They can identify high-risk patients and can educate and encourage those patients to receive the proper vaccinations. They also should be able to administer them.

In 2009, as H1N1 began to take hold, state leaders began to search for ways to stop the spread of this virus, and they looked to Florida's trained pharmacists for solutions. As a case study, the Palm Beach County Health Department collaborated with pharmacists and pharmacy-based retail clinics to increase access to influenza prevention and to help disseminate timely and accurate public health information.

The collaborative relationship proved invaluable for distributing, transferring and administering the H1N1 vaccine, managing access to antivirals and serving as a vital link to hospitals and other health care

Advertisement



Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Tallahassee • com

providers. A case study by the publisher Lippincott Williams and Wilkins concluded that "pharmacists can be an integral part of the nation's 'first line resource' for health and wellness and can extend the reach for public health initiatives."

Thousands of seniors die each year from vaccine-preventable diseases. Pharmacists have a history of quality service, and they should be able to join other medical professionals in the fight against these illnesses.



Dr. Kenneth Brummel-Smith

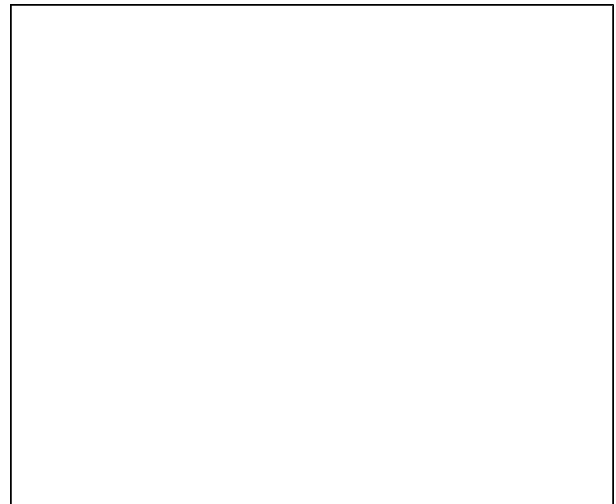
Zoom

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

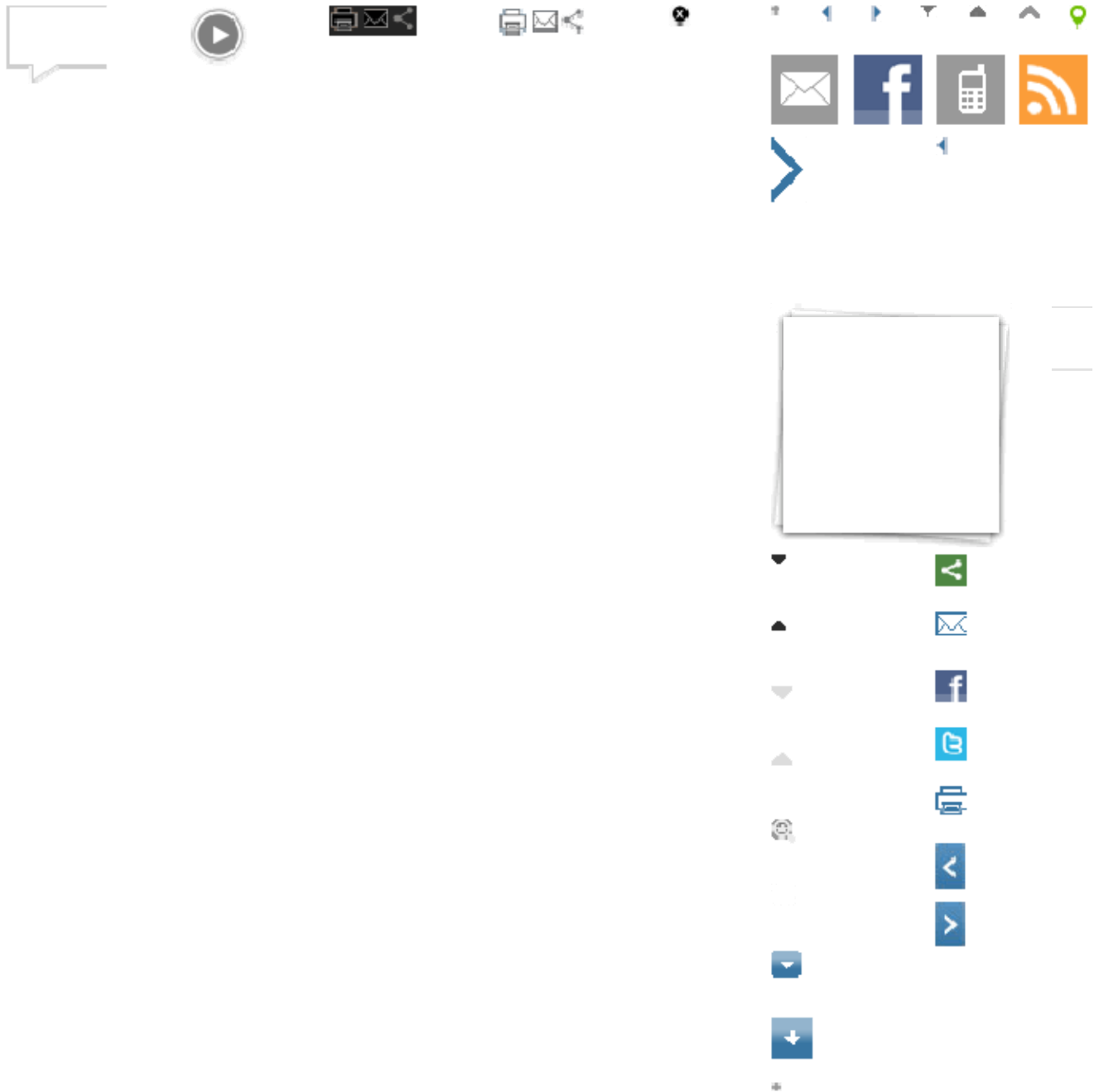
Dr. Kenneth Brummel-Smith is the Charlotte Edwards Maguire Professor and chair of the Department of Geriatrics at the Florida State University College of Medicine. Contact him at ken.brummel-smith@med.fsu.edu.

More

Advertisement



Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™







 Connect with Facebook

