#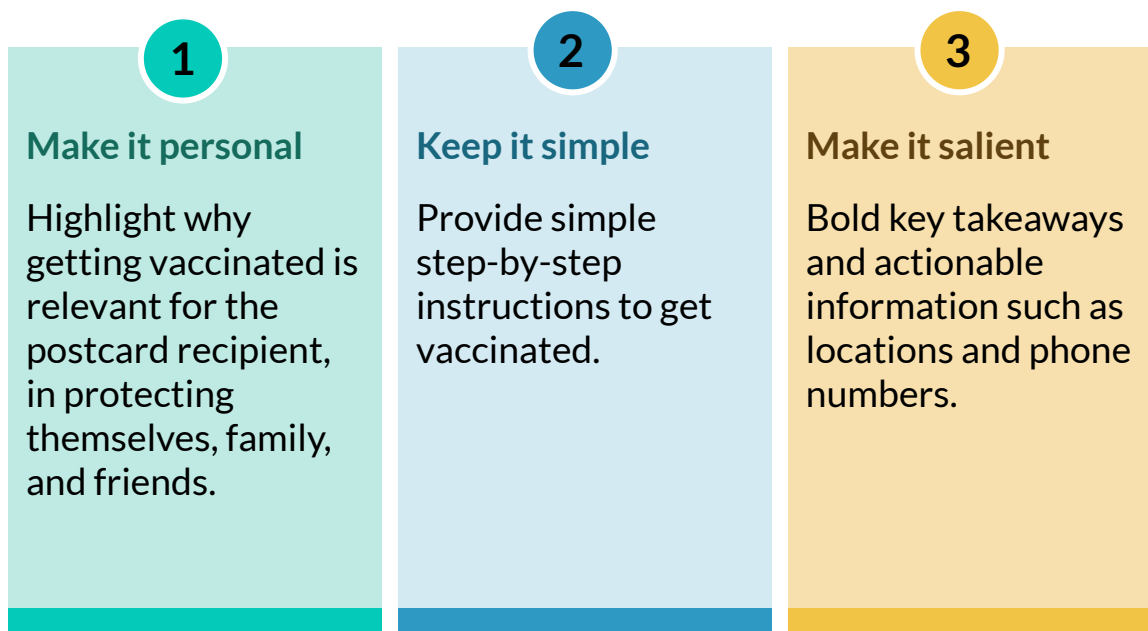 Behaviorally informed intervention materials for "Increasing flu vaccine uptake among Veterans at the Dorn VA Medical Center via a reminder postcard"

OES | GSA

In 2018, the Office of Evaluation Sciences and the Wm. Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center collaborated to identify interventions to increase flu vaccine uptake among Veterans who did not receive a flu vaccine the previous season. The Dorn VA ultimately selected a postcard intervention that included information on how to schedule a flu shot or primary care appointment.

In December of 2018, the Dorn VA randomly assigned 7,869 patients to either receive no postcard or to receive the postcard reminder. A follow-up analysis indicated that the treated Veterans who received a postcard were not significantly more likely to get vaccinated, and there were also no significant differences observed in scheduling a primary care appointment, information about which was also included in the postcard.

The letters were designed with three principles in mind: *make it personal*, *keep it simple*, and *make it salient*. (More information on designing effective communications can be found here.) The way these principles were applied to the letters is described below:

1

Make it personal

Highlight why getting vaccinated is relevant for the postcard recipient, in protecting themselves, family, and friends.

2

Keep it simple

Provide simple step-by-step instructions to get vaccinated.

3

Make it salient

Bold key takeaways and actionable information such as locations and phone numbers.

For more information on this intervention or to start a conversation, **please contact oes@gsa.gov.**

OES GSA

[Mailed on VA letterhead]

Dear Valued Veteran,

The flu is a highly contagious illness that can result in severe illness, pneumonia, hospitalization, or death so please protect yourself, family, and friends by getting a flu shot this flu season.

Highlight why getting vaccinated is relevant for the postcard recipient.

<u>**Here are your options for getting a flu shot:**</u>

1. With or without an appointment at the **Dorn VA or any VA Outpatient Clinic,** Monday-Friday 08:00-16:00.
2. **Walgreens Pharmacies** are providing FREE flu shots to VA patients with a VA ID.
3. **Call (800) 293-8262** if you would like to **make an appointment** for a flu shot OR to see your provider.

Provide clear action steps for getting vaccinated.

*"**If you have already received your flu shot outside of the VA,** please **Secure Message** your primary care team or call **803-776-4000, ext 4707** with the location and approximate date of your vaccination to ensure that your vaccination record is updated.*

Highlight important and actionable information.