

GOT YOUR SHOTS? NEWS

An Immunization Update from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)

January 2021

Keeping an eye on COVID-19 vaccine safety

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has provided two ways that providers and their patients can report adverse events that might occur after vaccination. These systems are critical for early detection of adverse events that could be related to vaccination.

Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS): relies on people reporting an event occurring after vaccination. If it is serious, the health care provider is required to report. It can be done through an online form at Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) (www.vaers.hhs.gov). Remind patients to alert the clinic if they had a side effect that prompted a visit to an urgent care or emergency room visit.

V-safe after vaccination health checker is a tool that allows a vaccinated person a way to check in after vaccination for any health concerns that develop. It uses text messaging and web surveys to report concerns. For more serious concerns, CDC may call to check in with the patient. V-safe will also send out a reminder to get the second dose. Registration can be done on a smart phone or online at V-safe After Vaccination Health Checker (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html). Be sure to inform your patients of this extra feature and provide the fact sheet that describes how to sign up. You can find the fact sheet and flyer under "resources" at COVID-19 Vaccine Providers (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/vaccine/provider.html>).

MIIC updates

For organizations using the spreadsheet upload option for reporting data, a new spreadsheet is available in MIIC. The guidance for using the spreadsheet can be found at General Immunization Upload Using the Spreadsheet Template (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/miic/data/spreadsheet.pdf>). Please download the spreadsheet from MIIC each time you fill it out.

There is a new MIIC menu item that lets providers view a history of their COVID-19 vaccine orders in MIIC. Click on "manage special vaccine events" under "vaccine management." Enter your provider pin number to view the history of COVID-19 doses shipped to your site. If you do not have access to this feature in MIIC please reach out to health.mdhvaccine@state.mn.us.

2021-22 MnVFC influenza prebook

Due to the demanding COVID-19 vaccine response work that is happening throughout our state, the 2021-22 MnVFC influenza prebook will not take place during January this year. Stay tuned to MnVFC Announcements this spring for more information about how to place your influenza prebook requests for the 2021-22 influenza season.

New weekly COVID-19 vaccine provider bulletin

Subscribe to our weekly bulletin to receive updates on COVID-19 vaccine information for health care providers. You can sign up and view past editions at COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Updates (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/vaccine/vaxbulletin.html>).

Phase 1a COVID-19 vaccination update

Minnesota is focusing on completing the vaccination of workers in phase 1a through local health departments and health care providers. Learn more about which health care personnel are included in phase 1a at COVID-19 Vaccine Phases and Planning (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/vaccine/plan.html>). We are working with health care providers to vaccinate people 65 years and older. State clinics and local public health departments are also working to vaccinate those 65 years and older, as well as educators and child care staff.

Any health care businesses, clinics, or individual workers who have not yet made arrangements for COVID-19 vaccination or contacted their local public health department, can register their need for a vaccine by completing the Health Care Vaccination Connection Form (<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/74db302b29b042628816ff9bd049b342>). Your information will be shared with your local health department. They will reach out to you when there are vaccines and appointments available. Individual workers should check with their employers before filling out the form themselves to be sure that their employers are not already making arrangements for vaccination.

Pediatric vaccination gap

We continue to monitor the gap in pediatric immunization coverage among children and adolescents. Looking back over the last four weeks for school-aged children, we continue to see similar trends when comparing weekly doses administered from this year to the same time last year.

In looking at recommended doses needed for HPV, MenACWY, and Tdap by 11-12 years of age, we continue to be behind by approximately 21,000 doses statewide when comparing January to December of 2019 to 2020. Similarly, for children 4-6 years of age for all recommended doses, we are behind by 42,000 doses for the same time frame. These differences are the same as reported in November's *Got Your Shots? News* article.

While some catch-up vaccination occurred during the last couple of months, the overall gap remains. This suggests the pandemic continues to have an impact on routine childhood and adolescent vaccinations. We will continue to monitor these trends into 2021.

Providers should develop a plan on how to continue routine pediatric vaccinations during the winter months. Here are some action items that partners can do to continue to address this important problem:

- Promote the MnVFC program to families, especially those who may be newly eligible.
- Consider innovative ways to safely bring vaccinations to communities in need (e.g., mobile vaccination units, school-located vaccination, etc.).
- For more information, visit Vaccination During COVID-19 (www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/hcp/vaxpan.html).