

Suggestions to Improve Immunization Services

Listed below are best practices that health care professionals and practices can use to improve their efficiency in administering vaccines and increase their immunization rates.

- Implement **standing orders** so that nurses and medical assistants can independently screen patients and administer vaccines under pre-existing signed physician's orders.
- Designate a champion on the practice team: someone to educate and encourage staff about immunizations.
- Review every step of the immunization delivery process with the practice team to identify areas that need clarification or steps where the process may be disrupted.
- Provide staff and providers education about vaccines, updates on immunization recommendations, suggestions for addressing patient concerns about immunizations, and methods of improving immunization coverage. Consider distributing a tool such as reference cards on immunizations or the CDC adult immunization schedule (see the resources section below).
- Utilize a system to identify patients who need immunizations and remind providers and/or staff about needed immunizations. Examples: chart reviews, electronic prompts, standard script to review patient immunization status.
- Maintain a comprehensive immunization record in a visible location in each patient's chart (e.g., the front of the chart).
- Implement a system of regular feedback on immunization coverage in the practice setting to monitor progress.
- Provide resources to patients who have questions or concerns about vaccine safety or who want more vaccine information.
- Offer flexible hours and/or sponsor external sites for immunization clinics.
- Offer multiple vaccines in special immunization clinics (such as annual influenza clinics).
- Review possible financial barriers to immunization and address any that can reasonably be addressed.
- Ensure that all health care workers are vaccinated!

Resources

National Immunization Program Hotline: 1 800 CDC-INFO

Immunization Action Coalition: www.immunize.org – Excellent source of expert information and printable materials for providers, staff, and patients.

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment: www.cdphe.state.co.us/dc/immunization - For immunization schedules, Colorado initiatives and issues, and updates on vaccine issues.

Colorado Clinical Guidelines Collaborative: www.coloradoguidelines.org – For immunization schedules and vaccine updates.