

Each year, the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) Foundation's Pfizer Immunization Awards recognize Family Medicine Residency programs that achieve high or improved immunization rates.

Here are some tips from award-winning programs on how to improve adult immunization rates in your community!

01 Focus on one vaccine at a time

- Develop a list of patients who have not received the vaccine
- Inform visiting patients that they are due to receive the specific vaccine and record their decision (e.g., patient received the vaccine, vaccine received outside the system, or declined)
- Research each patient's record to determine their last documented vaccination. If an active patient needs the vaccine, contact the patient and offer an appointment. If accepted, order the vaccine; If refused, document patient refusal. Schedule a reminder to ask during the next office visit; If unable to reach the patient, inform the patient during their next office visit
- If the patient is inactive, look to see if your practice remains their primary care center. If so, inform the patient that it's time for a vaccine and remind him/her to make an appointment with their doctor. Follow-up to confirm the patient has scheduled an office visit and whether they accepted or declined a vaccine

02 Increase administration and tracking of immunizations in underserved adult populations

- Improve accuracy of immunization tracking
 - Use electronic patient registries to generate immunization update reports
 - Establish a system for data entry to track patient immunizations given outside of the clinic
- Decrease rate of missed opportunities for immunization
 - Expand standing orders for adult immunization
 - Create a "high-risk" patient registry to identify patients in particular need of immunization
- Increase immunization knowledge and skills of staff, residents, and physicians
 - Improve knowledge of immunization guidelines and registries
 - Incorporate information about immunization into monthly provider meetings, conduct quarterly meetings to obtain immunization updates and share immunization reports

03 Improve Education of adult patient population

- Design and distribute handouts, written at a basic reading level that emphasize the importance of vaccines
- Launch an educational campaign targeting health care professionals at the facility with the goal of educating patients about vaccines, emphasizing the distribution of the new handout, answering common questions, and addressing safety issues



CASE STUDY

In an effort to improve the adult immunization rates in Wichita, Kan., Wesley Family Medicine Residency proposed a comprehensive system overhaul, seeking to further educate patients on the importance of immunization, and giving doctors the tools necessary to encourage and follow-up with patients regarding immunizations. Here are some of the steps being implemented to increase their adult patient immunization rates.

- Expand the use of templates with electronic health records (EHR)
- Use the EHR Patient Portal for immunization reminders and notes
- Connect with the State Immunization Registry (in Kansas it's Web IZ) to track patient immunizations given outside of the clinic.
- Include influenza immunization on OB care checklist
- Review adult immunization rates every six months using the EHR registry and expanded search tools
- Establish a work flow for adult patient wellness visits
- Present immunization rates to the practice management residents at regularly scheduled residency section meetings
- Educate first year residents regarding immunizations and work office flow during Family Medicine Month, which serves as an extended orientation to both outpatient clinical setting and the hospital
- Send two "nurse champions", a faculty member and a resident to the Kansas Immunization Program Annual Conference. The attending group presents information to the entire office later in the academic year, which served as an additional reminder about flu season
- Determine immunization needs and patient willingness at wellness visits
- Incorporate case studies from the *AFMRD Comprehensive Immunization Curriculum for Family Medicine Residency Programs* in the curriculum for the upper-level community medicine rotation and the *Adult and Pediatric* exams for PGY1 residents to demonstrate knowledge acquisition in these topic areas (this free curriculum is available at www.afmrd.org/files/Immunizations/ImmunizationsIndex.pdf)
- Create visual and easily accessible immunization schedules for pediatric, adolescent and adults for each nurses' station. Internet access to these charts also available at www.aafp.org/online/en/home/clinical/immunizationres.html
- Provide Spanish language education opportunities for staff, residents and physicians to help address language barriers for Spanish speaking families. The group purchased the "Rosetta Stone Language Education Program for Business," (Levels 1, 2 and 3), which was made possible through a grant
- Enhance patient visual education opportunities, in English and Spanish. The group purchased TVs, DVRs, carts, and educational DVDs for portable information systems

About the AAFP Foundation Pfizer Immunization Awards Program

The AAFP Foundation Pfizer Immunization Award winners are chosen for their ability to find creative, team-based solutions that increase immunization rates. Recipients were chosen for one of the following award categories:

- Best Practices - effective systems in place with immunization rates exceeding National standards;
- Most Improved - overcoming barriers to greatly improve immunization rates within a specified 12-month period;
- System Implementation – implementing a new system that will increase immunization rates in medically underserved populations.

For more information about the awards, and to apply for next year's awards, please visit:
www.aafpfoundation.org/immunizationawards

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