

IMMUNIZATION ACTION PLAN

ADHS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCREASING IMMUNIZATION COVERAGE RATES IN ARIZONA

JULY 2019

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

150 N. 18TH AVENUE
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Immunization coverage rates in Arizona continue to fall. The ability for parents to opt their child out of vaccination is simple and is being done more frequently in Arizona. This has resulted in families and communities being at increased risk for vaccine preventable diseases. ADHS has identified activities that could help to stop and reverse this negative trend and increase vaccine coverage rates across all Arizona communities.

GOALS:

1. Improve vaccine education to professionals who will interact with parents
2. Implement public information campaigns to promote vaccination
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of current vaccine education pilot in reducing exemptions
4. Ensure private providers continue to provide childhood vaccination services
5. Determine best practices for improving vaccination coverage
6. Partner with the Department of Education to increase school vaccination rates and compliance

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendations, created after meetings with healthcare providers, private and public institutions to address above goals include the following:

- **RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS GOAL 1:**
 1. Develop vaccination education materials for traditional VFC vaccination providers.
 2. Develop vaccination education materials for non-traditional vaccination providers and health educators
- **RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS GOAL 2:**
 1. Develop plans for regular pro-vaccination campaign messaging.
 2. Develop pro-vaccination social media messaging.
- **RECOMMENDATION TO ADDRESS GOAL 3:**
 1. Utilize 2019/2020 Immunization Data Report data to assess education course effectiveness in reducing the use of personal beliefs exemptions.
- **RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS GOAL 4:**
 1. Work with vaccination billers and vaccination payers to identify barriers to reimbursement for vaccine counseling.
 2. Develop materials that clearly define the benefits of VFC program participation and how to enroll.
 3. Review the recommendations from the Vaccine Financing and Availability Advisory Committee.
- **RECOMMENDATION TO ADDRESS GOAL 5:**
 1. Conduct a 50 state review to identify strategies implemented in other states that have proven to be effective at improving vaccination coverage.
- **RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS GOAL 6:**
 1. Regularly meet with Arizona Department of Education (ADE) staff to identify areas that would benefit from pro-vaccination communication.
 2. Immunization rule support can be strengthened at the school level.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

METHODS

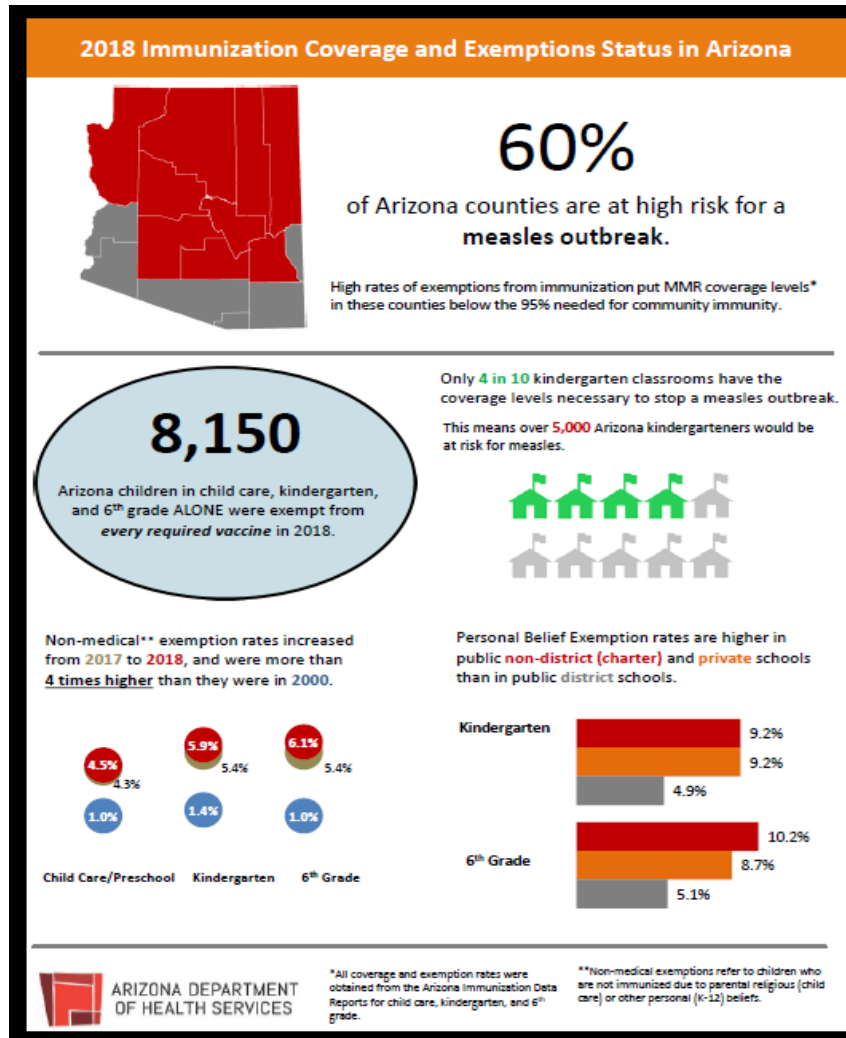
- Reviewed data from the annual Immunization Data Report over several years.
- Met with Immunization partners from across Arizona for a strategy development meeting.
- Participated in an immunization education course pilot.

Increase Immunization Coverage Rates in Arizona

Goal	2-year	5-year
Increase MMR coverage rates in Arizona Kindergarten students	.5%	1%
2018/2019 Rate: 94%	94.5	95.5

GOALS:

1. Improve vaccine education to professionals who will interact with parents
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5. Determine best practices for improving vaccination coverage
6. Partner with the Department of Education to increase school vaccination rates and compliance



Recommendations

Goals	Recommendations	Performance Measures
Improve vaccine education to professionals who will interact with parents	Develop vaccination education materials for traditional VFC vaccination providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly review of materials developed/shared Report of the number of provider offices that have received this information Survey to provider for feedback on developed and desired materials
	Develop vaccination education materials for non-traditional VFC vaccination providers and health educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly review of materials developed/shared Report of the number of provider offices that have received this information Survey to provider for feedback on developed and desired materials
Implement public information campaigns to promote vaccination	Develop plans for regular pro-vaccination messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of messages created Analytics for all ADHS social media platforms
	Develop pro-vaccination social media messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of messages created Analytics for marketing messages
Evaluate effectiveness of current vaccine education pilot in reducing exemptions	Utilize 2019/2020 Immunization Data Report data to assess education course effectiveness in reducing the use of PBEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Kindergarten IDR data for 2019/2020 school year Compare 2019/2020 Kindergarten IDR data to data from 2018/2019 school year in participating pilot schools Assess any change in use of PBEs in pilot schools Determine if statewide rollout is appropriate
Ensure private providers continue to provide childhood vaccination services	Work with vaccination billers and vaccination payers to identify barriers to reimbursement for vaccine counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of meetings with stakeholders Barriers identified Materials developed/distributed
	Develop materials that clearly define the benefits of VFC program participation and how to enroll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials developed and shared Number of groups, organizations, providers that receive this information Number of VFC program participants
	Review the recommendations from the Vaccine Financing and Availability Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings held Action plan developed
Determine best practices for improving vaccination coverage	Conduct a 50 state review to identify strategies implemented in other states that have proven to be effective at improving vaccination coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of VFC programs reviewed Publications of immunization best practice Review of information posted on the Association of Immunization Managers (AIM) website as it relates to best practices
Increase school vaccination rates and compliance	Regularly meet with Arizona Department of Education (ADE) staff to identify areas that would benefit from pro-vaccination communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Join letter to schools from Superintendent Hoffman and Dr. Christ Flyer for where to be vaccinated and where to find vaccination records that will be shared with schools Co-brand (ADHS/ADE) IDR compliance and coverage certificates
	Strengthen immunization rule support at the school level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training materials developed Attend meetings to promote pro-vaccine practices at schools

RECOMMENDATION BRIEF: VACCINE EDUCATION

RECOMMENDATION FOR GOAL #1:

1. Develop vaccination education materials for traditional VFC vaccination providers

BACKGROUND & GAP: Arizona has well over 750 providers that participate in the Vaccines For Children (VFC) program. Many of the staff at these offices has had little or no formal training related to vaccine science.

TRENDS & SERVICES IN ARIZONA: Provider staff has requested information and training to better prepare them to discuss vaccination with their patients. They desire to know more about communicating with patients and parents with questions about vaccines.

ACTION PLAN/TIMELINE:

- By December 2019 AIPO will identify trainings needed for provider staff
- By June 2020 develop and share trainings and materials designed to assist provider staff with having discussions about the benefits and safety of vaccines.

ADHS DIVISIONS AND AGENCIES IMPACTED:
ADHS AIPO

LEAD: Meagan Surgenor

FUNDING AND SOURCE

Estimate: \$100,000

Source: Immunization Program Funds

METRICS:

- Quarterly review of materials developed/shared
- Report of the number of provider offices that have received this information
- Survey monkey to providers for feedback on developed and desired materials

RECOMMENDATION BRIEF: VACCINE EDUCATION

RECOMMENDATION FOR GOAL #1:

2. Develop vaccination education materials for non-traditional vaccination providers and health educators

BACKGROUND & GAP: Families in Arizona have a wide variety of resources to learn more about vaccination including home visitors and school personnel. These individuals do not always have medical training, however, they are often considered to be a valued part of the information pool and need to have the most current, scientific information related to vaccine safety and efficacy to share with families.

TRENDS & SERVICES IN ARIZONA: Home visitors, school personnel and others routinely provide education to the people that they work with. Evidence-based training and educational materials are not always readily available to support these individuals with delivering information about vaccines.

ACTION PLAN/TIMELINE:

- By December 2019 Identify immunization materials available and what is yet needed
- By June 30, 2020 share appropriate immunization education materials for the non-traditional immunization education providers

ADHS DIVISIONS AND AGENCIES IMPACTED:

ADHS AIPO

ADHS BWCH

ADHS Licensing

ADE

LEAD: Rachael Salley

FUNDING AND SOURCE

Estimate: \$250,000

Source: 50% Immunization Program Funds, 50% TBD

METRICS:

- Quarterly review of materials developed/shared
- Report of the number of partners that have received this information
- Survey monkey for feedback on developed and desired materials

RECOMMENDATION BRIEF: PRO-VACCINATION MESSAGING

RECOMMENDATION FOR GOAL #2:

1. Develop plans for regular pro-vaccination messaging

BACKGROUND & GAP: Anti-vaccination messaging is becoming increasingly more prevalent in AZ and across the US. Immunization information seekers are met with multiple sites with immunization information inaccurately claiming to be scientifically based and factual.

TRENDS & SERVICES IN ARIZONA: In AZ, about 95% of parents chose to vaccinate their children. In some cases parents choose an alternate schedule outside what is defined by ACIP. The numbers of parents opting out of vaccination continues to increase however. Ensuring that pro-vaccination has an equal voice is important for ensuring vaccination information seekers have quick and easy access to scientific information in order to make an informed vaccination decision.

ACTION PLAN/TIMELINE:

- By October 31, 2019 determine if there is funding for this recommendation.
- If funding is identified, ADHS will establish a strong immunization media campaign(s) to be shared across AZ (TV, Radio, Etc.) by June 30, 2020

ADHS DIVISIONS AND AGENCIES IMPACTED:

ADHS AIPO

ADHS PIO

TAPI

LEAD: Dana Goodloe

FUNDING AND SOURCE

Estimate: \$1,000,000

Source: TBD

METRICS:

- Number of messages created
- Analytics provide by the marketing agency

RECOMMENDATION BRIEF: PRO-VACCINATION MESSAGING

RECOMMENDATION FOR GOAL #2:

2. Develop pro-vaccination social media messaging

BACKGROUND & GAP: Anti-vaccination messaging is becoming increasingly more prevalent in AZ and across the US. Immunization information seekers are met with multiple sites with immunization information inaccurately claiming to be scientifically based and factual.

TRENDS & SERVICES IN ARIZONA: In AZ, about 95% of parents chose to vaccinate their children. In some cases parents choose an alternate schedule outside what is defined by ACIP. The numbers of parents opting out of vaccination continues to increase however. Ensuring that pro-vaccination has an equal voice is important for ensuring vaccination information seekers have quick and easy access to scientific information in order to make an informed vaccination decision.

ACTION PLAN/TIMELINE:

- By October 31, 2019 determine if there is funding for this recommendation.
- If funding is found ADHS and PIO will establish a strong immunization social marketing campaign(s) to be shared on all ADHS media platforms by June 30, 2020

ADHS DIVISIONS AND AGENCIES IMPACTED:

ADHS AIPO

ADHS PIO

TAPI

LEAD: Dana Goodloe

FUNDING AND SOURCE

Estimate: \$500,000

Source: TBD

METRICS:

- Number of messages created
- Analytics for all ADHS social media platforms

RECOMMENDATION BRIEF: EFFECTIVENESS OF CURRENT VACCINE EDUCATION

RECOMMENDATION FOR GOAL #3:

1. Utilize 2019/2020 Immunization Data Report data to assess education course effectiveness in reducing the use of PBEs

BACKGROUND & GAP: An increasing number of AZ Kindergarten students are being exempted from vaccination. The annual Immunization Data Report indicates that 60% of Arizona Counties are at increased risk for a measles outbreak as they have MMR coverage rates below 95%. ADHS wishes to ensure that parents that opt out of vaccination have a full understanding of the possible side effects of that choice.

TRENDS & SERVICES IN ARIZONA: There has been a steady increase in the use of PBEs in AZ over the past five years. This information is pulled from the annual immunization data report; schools provide their school specific data and ADHS compiles the report. PBE forms were last updated in 2013; while they included valuable information for parents they have not slowed the use of PBEs. ADHS launched a pilot program in January 2019 that requires parents requesting a PBE to complete an on-line immunization education course (IEC) to secure a PBE form. There are 244 schools in the pilot that runs through the 2019/2020 school year.

ACTION PLAN/TIMELINE:

- By September 15, 2019 open the IDR application so that school may report the immunization coverage rates
- By November 15, 2019 close the IDR Application
- By May 31, 2020 evaluate the impact the IEC had on the PBE usage rates in the 244 participating pilot schools.
- By June 30, 2020 determine if the IEC should be rolled out statewide and required for all PBEs

ADHS DIVISIONS AND AGENCIES IMPACTED:

ADHS AIPO

ADE

LEAD: Rachael Salley

FUNDING AND SOURCE

Estimate: \$150,000

Source: Immunization Program Funds

METRICS:

- Review Kindergarten IDR data for 2019/2020 school year
- Compare 2019/2020 Kindergarten IDR data to the data from 2018/2019 school year in participating pilot schools
- Assess any change in the use of PBEs in these pilot schools
- Determine if statewide rollout is appropriate

RECOMMENDATION BRIEF: CHILDHOOD VACCINATION SERVICES

RECOMMENDATION FOR GOAL # 4:

1. Work with vaccination billers and vaccination payers to identify barriers to reimbursement for vaccine counseling.

BACKGROUND & GAP: Arizona healthcare providers indicate that parents are curious about the importance and safety of vaccines. There is significant vaccine misinformation available on the internet. Arizona providers would like to provide vaccination education for their patients with questions or concerns about vaccination. This takes both time and effort for the provider. If the provider cannot bill their time for this effort they are less likely to have these conversations.

TRENDS & SERVICES IN ARIZONA: Vaccines are financially complex for offices because of upfront overhead, lag in payments and little influence in payment and pricing. With vaccine hesitancy more families have questions about the decision to vaccinate that are not covered in the payment structure related to vaccine administration. The most common CPT codes 90460 and 90461 allow the costs of physically giving the vaccine and advising the patient on the information contained in the Vaccine Information Statement (VIS). The intricacies of parent's questions about vaccines cannot be addressed in a typical visit and often require multiple conversations that are not billable when not accompanied by the administration of vaccine.

ACTION PLAN/TIMELINE:

- Host quarterly meetings with stakeholders
- Identify barriers by March 30, 2020
- By June 30, 2020, establish payment guidelines that will assist vaccine providers to bill for their counseling time with patients

ADHS DIVISIONS AND AGENCIES IMPACTED:

ADHS AIPO

AHCCCS

TAPI

Health plans

LEAD: TAPI, Debbie McCune Davis

FUNDING AND SOURCE

Estimate: \$200,000

Source: TBD

METRICS: By June 30, 2020, vaccinators and billers will have an increased understanding of what is billable how to bill for provision of immunization counseling to their patients

- Number of meetings with stakeholders
- Barriers identified
- Materials developed/distributed

RECOMMENDATION BRIEF: CHILDHOOD VACCINATION SERVICES

RECOMMENDATION FOR GOAL # 4:

2. Develop materials that clearly define the benefits of VFC program participation and how to enroll.

BACKGROUND & GAP: The number of providers enrolled in the Arizona VFC program varies throughout the year; however the total number of enrolled providers has declined over the last five years. There are multiple reasons for this drop; including small census of eligible patients in their practice, administration/reporting of the program, and removal from the program due to failure to order and provide vaccines to eligible patients. It is critical that there be a large network of providers across AZ to ensure that eligible children have access to VFC vaccine at their local provider office.

TRENDS & SERVICES IN ARIZONA: Enrollment in VFC in AZ is decreasing, from over 900 providers in 2013 to just over 750 providers currently; this can leave areas without availability of VFC vaccines for eligible children. This in turn could impact community immunity and increase the risk of disease outbreaks.

ACTION PLAN/TIMELINE:

- By December 30, 2019 identify materials needed for program enhancement
- By March 30, 2019 collect data that identifies the benefits of program participation
- By June 30, 2020 develop and share materials for VFC current providers and potential providers to enhance understanding and value of program participation.

ADHS DIVISIONS AND AGENCIES IMPACTED:

ADHS AIPO

TAPI

AHCCCS

AOMA

AzAAP

LEAD: Dana Goodloe

FUNDING AND SOURCE

Estimate: \$200,000

Source: Immunization Program Funds

METRICS:

- Materials developed and shared
- Number of groups, organizations, providers that received this information
- Number of VFC program participants

RECOMMENDATION BRIEF: CHILDHOOD VACCINATION SERVICES

RECOMMENDATION FOR GOAL # 4:

3. Review the recommendations from the Vaccine Financing and Availability Advisory Committee.

BACKGROUND & GAP: In the fall of 2014, following the passage of HB2491, ADHS engaged immunizers and other designated parties in the Vaccine Financing and Availability Advisory Committee to make recommendations about the cost, purchasing, payment, and availability of vaccines.

TRENDS & SERVICES IN ARIZONA: The Vaccine Financing and Availability Advisory Committee have not reconvened since this project was completed. Some immunization providers are stating that the cost of providing immunizations exceeds their business finance capabilities

ACTION PLAN/TIMELINE:

- By the 2nd quarter convene stakeholder meeting
- By 3rd quarter survey providers to identify barriers to vaccine payments
- By June 30, 2020, revisit the committee findings and assess what next steps should be implemented.

ADHS DIVISIONS AND AGENCIES IMPACTED:

ADHS AIPO

TAPI

AHCCCS

AOMA

AzAAP

LEAD: Debbie McCune Davis

FUNDING AND SOURCE

Estimate: \$200,000

Source: TBD

METRICS:

- Meetings held
- Action plan developed

RECOMMENDATION BRIEF: BEST PRACTICES

RECOMMENDATION FOR GOAL # 5:

1. Conduct a 50 state review to identify strategies implemented in other states that have proven to be effective at improving vaccination coverage

BACKGROUND & GAP: Immunization coverage is essential for the prevention of outbreaks of disease in communities and across the nation. There are 61 VFC programs across the country; all have the common goal of maintaining effective coverage rates to protect their families and visitors to their states.

TRENDS & SERVICES IN ARIZONA: AZ is interested in utilizing education and program tools that will enhance and protect the coverage rates in our state. AZ has an active immunization network who is always seeking the most innovative and effective ways to meet this goal.

ACTION PLAN/TIMELINE:

- Begin review of available tools and materials in January 2020
- By March 2020 begin to compile useful tools and materials
- By June 30, 2020 establish a catalog of tools and educational items that can be utilized in AZ to provide vaccination information for informed vaccination practice and decision making

ADHS DIVISIONS AND AGENCIES IMPACTED: **ADHS AIPO**

LEAD: Rachael Salley

FUNDING AND SOURCE

Estimate: \$100,000

Source: Immunization Program Funds

METRICS:

- Number of VFC programs reviewed
- Publications of immunization best practice
- Review of information posted on the Association of Immunization Managers (AIM) website as it relates to best practices

RECOMMENDATION BRIEF: INCREASE SCHOOL VACCINATION RATES

RECOMMENDATION FOR GOAL # 6:

1. Regularly meet with Arizona Department of Education (ADE) staff to identify areas that would benefit from pro-vaccination communication

BACKGROUND & GAP: AZ schools have limited availability of nursing staff. School health staff does not routinely receive immunization education and therefore do not have sufficient information to share with parents.

TRENDS & SERVICES IN ARIZONA: Some AZ school staff hand out PBE forms or include them in enrollment packets. The Department of Education has committed to working with ADHS for informational and educational exchange to improve coverage and reduce PBE usage in AZ.

ACTION PLAN/TIMELINE:

- By July 2019 develop a joint letter on vaccine benefits between ADHS and ADE to be shared with schools
- By July 2019 develop a tool of where to get vaccinated/find vaccination records
- By June 30, 2020 work collaboratively to ensure that school staff will understand the benefits of immunization.

ADHS DIVISIONS AND AGENCIES IMPACTED:

ADHS AIPO

ADE

LEAD: Rachael Salley

FUNDING AND SOURCE

Estimate: \$250,000

Source: TBD

METRICS:

- Joint letter to schools from Superintendent Hoffman and Director Christ
- Flyer for where to be vaccinated and where to find vaccination records that will be shared with schools
- Co-brand (ADHS/ADE) IDR compliance and coverage certificates

RECOMMENDATION BRIEF: INCREASE SCHOOL VACCINATION RATES

RECOMMENDATION FOR GOAL # 6:

2. Immunization rule support can be strengthened at the school level

BACKGROUND & GAP: AZ schools have limited availability of nursing staff. School health staff does not routinely receive immunization education and therefore do not have sufficient information to share with parents

TRENDS & SERVICES IN ARIZONA: Some AZ school staff hand out PBE forms or include them in enrollment packets. The Department of Education has committed to working with ADHS for informational and educational exchange to improve coverage

ACTION PLAN/TIMELINE:

- Quarterly meetings between ADHS and ADE designees to identify gaps and barriers
- By July 31, 2019 develop training materials for school staff that provide a strong vaccination message.

ADHS DIVISIONS AND AGENCIES IMPACTED:

ADHS AIPO

Superintendent Hoffman's Office

LEAD: Rachael Salley

FUNDING AND SOURCE

Estimate: \$100,000

Source: TBD

METRICS:

- Training materials developed
- Attend meetings to promote pro-vaccine practices at schools