

HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CONSIDERATIONS FOR ADOLESCENT VACCINES



Vaccinations have had a positive impact on helping to reduce vaccine-preventable diseases in the United States. Most parents today have never seen first-hand the consequences that vaccine-preventable diseases can have.¹ While many childhood diseases are now uncommon in the United States due to routine vaccination, there are still populations of children, including adolescents, who have not completed the recommended vaccination series or who remain unvaccinated, and as a result, are susceptible to disease.

Consider the following reasons why adolescents still need to be vaccinated:

Fading immunity—

Despite being vaccinated with some vaccines as young children, older children may become susceptible again. Protection provided by some vaccines is not life-long.²

No previous exposure—

Vaccines work best when they are introduced before an individual's first encounter with a virus, so that protective immunity is possible before exposure.²

Changing viruses—

Influenza virus strains are constantly changing. This requires a new vaccine to be produced each year with the changing virus strains. It also means yearly vaccination is recommended.²

Adolescent vaccination rates are an important metric in the prevention of certain serious infectious diseases.³

Recent studies show:

- Adolescents are less likely to originate in your office for a well-visit as they get older.⁴ There is still a need for continued emphasis and effort to improve completion rates of vaccines for adolescents.



**A Call
to
Action**

One way for health care organizations, doctors' offices, and providers to help improve **awareness, identification, recommendation, and education** regarding ACIP-recommended vaccines to adolescents and their parents is through **consistent use of existing health information technology functions.**⁵

continued

Have you considered the following health information technology opportunities in your organization?

If not, why? What other methods might you be using?



Health Care Organization, Doctor's Office, or Provider

Before a patient comes in for a visit

- ❑ **Identify due or overdue vaccines** using alerts, smart texts, wellness templates, etc
- ❑ **Create orders for completion** of vaccine series, if multi-dosed
- ❑ **Automate vaccine recommendation language** to encourage same day vaccination, including use of appropriate vaccine reminders, with real-time health care provider phrases and patient education



While the patient is with the provider

- ❑ **Highlight vaccine gaps** in care by running reports to identify patients needing adolescent vaccines
- ❑ **Engage the patient/parent about vaccination opportunities** due now or due soon (letter, phone, e-mail, live, video, or via the patient portal)
- ❑ **Identify and use EHR** features to append or order vaccines as part of pre-visit planning tools
- ❑ **Examine wellness registries** to identify adolescents with overdue vaccine doses



Before the patient leaves the office

- ❑ **Send vaccination reminders** through the patient portal, text, mail, etc for upcoming vaccination visits
- ❑ **Identify and engage through outreach**, patients who are overdue for adolescent vaccines, especially patients aging out of vaccine age recommendations



- ❑ **Schedule next office visit** for any remaining vaccine needs
- ❑ **Outline in After Visit Summary instructions** for follow-up visits, future dates, and education



In between visits

Parents and Care Givers



ACIP=Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices; EHR=electronic health record.

References: 1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Vaccines for your children. Protect your child at every age. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/protecting-children/index.html>. Accessed August 20, 2018. 2. The Vaccine Center at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. *Immunizations. Vaccines and Teens. The Busy Social Years*. 5th ed. Philadelphia, PA: CHOP; 2017. 3. Blue Cross Blue Shield. The Health of America Report. Adolescent Vaccination Rates in America. Blue Cross Blue Shield Association; 2018. <https://www.bcbs.com/the-health-of-america/reports/adolescent-vaccination-rates-in-america>. Accessed August 20, 2018. 4. Medicaid.gov. Adolescent Well-Care Visits: Ages 12-21. <https://www.medicaid.gov/state-overviews/scorecard/state-health-system-performance/prevention-and-treatment/adolescent-well-care/index.html>. Accessed September 7, 2018. 5. Stockwell MS, Fiks AG. Utilizing health information technology to improve vaccine communication and coverage. *Human Vaccines Immunotherap*. 2013;9(8):1802-1811.