

# Overview of National Immunization Conference

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## Disclaimer

- The opinions expressed in this presentation are solely those of the presenter and do not necessarily represent the official positions of Immunize.org, or the National Adult and Influenza Immunization Summit
- Focus will be on adult immunization-related implementation topics and quotes from those sessions.
- Audience participation will be requested! Bring your favorite quotes to the microphone.



## National Immunization Conference (NIC) Charting the Future for Immunization Together: Building on Centuries of Protecting the Public

- First NIC since 2018
- Themes
  - Epidemiology and surveillance of vaccine-preventable diseases
  - Implementation and program management
  - Vaccine equity & special populations
  - General vaccinology
  - Monitoring, assessment and evaluation
  - Strategies to improve vaccination coverage/uptake



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## Theme Charting the Future for Immunization Together: Building on Centuries of Protecting the Public

- Plenary sessions focused on:
  - Need to build a comprehensive immunization infrastructure to cover the lifespan
  - Remind audience of the immense impact of vaccines, and COVID-19 vaccine implementation efforts, specifically
  - Encouraged comprehensive vaccination for respiratory season due to increased yearly burden of illness brought by COVID-19
  - Celebrated the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VFC program and impact on reducing disparities
  - Stressed the need for routine vaccination infrastructure and vaccinations as essential to emergency preparedness
  - Recognized that continued hard work will be needed to improve our current vaccination coverage



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## National Immunization Conference (NIC)

### • Epidemiology and surveillance of vaccine-preventable diseases

- Increases noted in antibiotic resistant *N. meningitidis*
- Declines in HPV infections and HPV-related pre-cancers
- Increases in measles in U.S. and internationally
- Continuing cases of mpox and need for vaccination
- Eradication of wildtype 2 and 3 polio viruses, but continued circulation of vaccine derived polio viruses and two countries where polio virus transmission remains endemic
  - US domestic vaccination remains critical.
- Large decline in varicella incidence (97%) and outbreaks and need to educate providers on testing of persons with suspicious rashes
- Impact of pneumococcal conjugate vaccines on community prevalence of vaccine serotypes
- Substantial progress toward goal of rubella and congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) elimination.



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## National Immunization Conference (NIC)

### • Implementation and program management

- Immunization information systems (IIS)
  - Successes and program progress since 2020, including implementation of IZ Gateway
  - Benefits from increased data exchange for jurisdictions and providers and patients
  - Use of IIS to support vaccination coverage assessment
  - Funding support needed for providers to update their IIS connections and systems
  - Utilization of IIS data important for assessing and addressing vaccine access and vaccination inequities
- VFC
  - 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary – expanded from 5 vaccines and 9 VPDs to 15 vaccines preventing 18 VPDs with additional vaccines for high risk or travelers
  - Many contributors to VFC legislation included work championed by Betty Bumpers and Rosalind Carter, measles resurgence and subsequent actions by Walter Orenstein and Alan Hinman and many others.
  - VFC helps provide an advance market commitment for manufacturers to encourage vaccine development
  - Allows for rapid implementation of new vaccines and vaccine recommendations without additional Congressional appropriation



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## National Immunization Conference (NIC)

- **Implementation and program management**
  - “You measure what you treasure” – measuring and feedback important driver of improving vaccination rates
  - Vaccine access challenges contributes to lower vaccination rates especially for adults
    - Payment challenges and vaccine purchase costs are deterrents to provider participation in vaccination services
    - Reductions in vaccine uptake when not offered by the provider in the office
    - Lack of payment for vaccine counseling as financial disincentive for adult providers
    - Barriers to medical offices and hospitals to vaccinate with Part D vaccines.
      - No DRG code for inpatients



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## National Immunization Conference (NIC)

- **Implementation and program management**
  - Challenges to maternal vaccination
    - RSV immunization errors reported and tools to help avoid them are available.
    - Payment/reimbursement issues specific to obstetrical care
      - Increasing number of vaccines for pregnant women, but payment issues have not kept up with the recommendations
    - Coordination of care challenges for RSV prevention
    - Factors associated with vaccination include provider recommendation with use of motivational interviewing, patient education, in-clinic support to provide clear information and address misinformation.
    - Need to enroll more birthing hospitals as VFC providers



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## National Immunization Conference (NIC)

- **Implementation and program management**

- Adult immunization Framework described for immunization programs using a maturity model to encourage adult vaccination programs improvement
- Ability of pharmacy techs to administer vaccines ended with the PREP Act in some states which will adversely impact pharmacist vaccination capacity.
- Challenges with healthcare personnel vaccination, especially in LTCF, medical assistants and other staff. More likely to be vaccinated with more training and higher education.
- Vaccination in Community Health Centers has unique challenges that need to be addressed. Described in NACHC's recent white paper update.
- Over 60% of adults are open to getting more than one vaccine at a visit



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## National Immunization Conference (NIC)

- **Vaccine equity & special populations**

- Disparities remain in vaccination rates for uninsured adults and also certain racial and ethnic groups
  - Speakers emphasized access as a primary root cause, not hesitancy
- Identifying and empowering trusted messengers and vaccine champions to engage with their communities is necessary to improve vaccine confidence
- Improving vaccine access by working with partners who have existing trusted relationships
- Importance of culturally competent and appropriate materials and staff, and translations that are culturally accurate and appropriate
- Authentic, consistent, reliable partnerships and funding needed to maintain progress, support staff, and keep trust and confidence
- Bridge program for COVID-19 vaccination of uninsured and awareness of the population and vaccine uptake and implementation was described and ends this month.
- Issues and approached to vaccination of staff in LTCF
- Unique issues for vaccination of rural populations



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## National Immunization Conference (NIC)

- **General vaccinology**

- Multiple vaccine development advances over time, but policy and infrastructure have not kept pace
- FDA mechanisms in place to bring critical-need products quickly to public while ensuring safety monitoring, in collaboration with CDC, is robust
- Candidate vaccine viruses have been developed for H5N1 and surveillance and preparedness continue, although risk is currently deemed low.
- Many countries now using single dose HVP vaccination; ACIP will be considering this off-label recommendation .



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## National Immunization Conference (NIC)

- **Strategies to improve vaccination coverage/uptake**

- Strategies to improve social norming of being vaccinated
- Meet people where they are – mobile and community vaccination clinics, workplace vaccination clinics and incentivizing employee vaccination
- Need to develop and foster multi-sector collaboration to identify and refine strategies to best work with communities of need, e.g., mpox vaccination
- Ensuring culturally competent, empathetic, collaborative outreach to vulnerable communities and outreach in creative way relevant to the community
- Work with the whole healthcare community including specialty providers like cardiologists, endocrinologists, oncologists and other specialists
- Need to leverage stories in communications efforts and social media
- Several presentations detailed factors associated with patient vaccine acceptance
  - provider recommendation
  - feeling that the vaccine is for their health benefit



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## Themes

- It takes a village (and funding) to improve vaccine confidence and uptake
  - Individual communities with low rates should be assessed for barriers and work with trusted community members
  - Healthcare and pharmacy settings, birthing hospitals, long term care, and specialty providers are all need to reach adult populations
  - Mobile clinics in workplaces, worship, school, etc. work to meet people where they are
  - Communications should occur through multiple channels and languages and tailored to different communities
  - Ongoing partnerships with community-based organizations are essential



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## Quotes that stuck or struck a chord

- Vaccines are miracles
  - Demetre Daskalakis, NCIRD/CDC
- People aren't hard to reach; our systems are hard to reach.
  - Johanne Morne, NYS Department of Health
- Politics may be the quintessential vaccination issue of our time.
  - Ann Schuchat, CDC retired
- Routine vaccination is public health preparedness.
  - Demetre Daskalakis, NCIRD/CDC



[https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/mm7332e1.htm?\\_cid=mm7332e1\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/mm7332e1.htm?_cid=mm7332e1_w)  
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/recommendations.html#meeting-recommendations>

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## Quotes

- Vaccines don't save lives; vaccinations save lives.
- Walt Orenstein, CDC retired
- Success in immunizations is a deterrent to future immunization success.
- Melinda Wharton, NCIRD/CDC
- Everyone owns adult immunizations, yet nobody owns adult immunizations.
- Ruth Carrico, VaxCare
- The importance of community-based organizations cannot be overstated. We are better together.
- Synovia Moss, Good Health Wins



[https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/mm7332e1.htm?\\_cid=mm7332e1\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/mm7332e1.htm?_cid=mm7332e1_w)  
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/recommendations.html#meeting-recommendations>

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## Quotes

- Underwater reimbursement will lead to reduced access to vaccines.
- Allison Hill, APhA
- Lack of reimbursement confidence is a barrier.
- Evelyn Twentyman, NCIRD/CDC
- We are not hesitant. We need more information to be more vaccine confident.
- Synovia Moss, Good Health Wins
- Let people know that getting vaccinated helps you "be part of a cool group"
- Amy Callis, DHHS



[https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/mm7332e1.htm?\\_cid=mm7332e1\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/mm7332e1.htm?_cid=mm7332e1_w)  
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/recommendations.html#meeting-recommendations>

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Please suggest other  
notable takeaways or  
quotes to remember

