

FROM: Christine Finley, Immunization Program Manager
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RE: Addition of Influenza Vaccine for Adults 19 – 64 years to the VFA Program
DATE: April 23, 2019

The Vermont Department of Health Immunization Program, with support from the Immunization Funding Advisory Committee (IFAC), will provide influenza vaccine through the Vaccines for Adults (VFA) Program for use in adults 19-64 years, beginning September 2019. The change is in response to decreased flu vaccination rates, requests from practices that the VFA Program provide flu vaccine and a statutory obligation to provide vaccines at the “lowest possible cost”.

After economic analysis presentations on the potential cost savings to the IFAC and extensive discussions, the IFAC provided support for a “pilot” VFA flu vaccine initiative at the October 30, 2018 meeting. The Program next surveyed all VFA practices to ascertain how many would choose to order flu vaccine at no cost through the VFA program, instead of private purchase or referral to a pharmacy. 72% (114/200) of enrolled VFA practices chose to participate in the VFA flu vaccine pilot. All VFA practices were contacted to determine if they would participate and they submitted a non-binding estimate of flu vaccine they would order through the VFA Program.

Based on the information obtained, the Program pre-booked 50,000 doses of adult flu vaccine with the CDC in February, at a cost of \$549,900. Payment will be required in the Fall when the vaccine is sent to the distributor. In September, flu vaccines will be ordered for all VFA enrolled practices that indicated they would participate and provided an estimate of vaccine need.

Flu vaccine will be made available at all 12 District Health Offices for uninsured adults. Practices should also continue to privately purchase vaccine for adult patients 65 and older. In November, the Health Department will conduct a social media campaign promoting flu vaccine use in adults for the fourth year.

At the end of the flu season, the Health Department will review the process and determine outcomes from the Flu vaccine for VFA practices pilot program. Some of the process measures to be considered are:

1. comparing flu vaccine doses administered as reported to the IMR by VFA practices that chose to order flu vaccine with those who did not by affiliation with a hospital or FQHC, population density, pharmacy density and provider type;
2. identifying VFA practices that are offering flu vaccine for the first time (new access);
3. for VFA practices that didn't order flu vaccine through the Program, assessing the amount of flu vaccine administered through the Immunization Registry; and
4. for pharmacies reporting to the Immunization Registry, identifying the amount of flu vaccine administered by county or HSA.



In determining outcomes, the Health Department will:

1. use the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey to compare flu vaccination rates for adults in 2019-20, with three prior years;
2. identify the amount of VFA flu vaccine
 - a. pre-booked
 - b. requested
 - c. provided to practices
 - d. reported in the Immunization Registry; and
3. request Health Department Public Health Statistics to conduct an analysis of Vermont influenza and pneumonia hospitalization and mortality rates for 2018-19 and 2019-20 if possible. Compare with national rates.

