



Immu-News

October 2009

Part Two: Vaccine Hesitant Patients—What’s a Provider to Do?

Welcome to **Immu-News**, the Immunization Initiatives listserv, a monthly resource for the community of participants in this project. For now, this is post-only listserv (in other words, you will get only one e-mail per month in your mailbox, instead of floods of daily discussions) but we hope to evolve into a more interactive form, something that will truly be of service to you as each of you searches for ways to improve your ability to record and access immunization data, to increase immunizations provided to your clients, and thus to improve the health of your community.

Again, **Dr. Deborah Wexler, the Executive Director of the Immunization Action Coalition** provides further reading and research on the topic of parental hesitation. In the second half, we take a brief look at adults specifically: why do adults hesitate to receive vaccines? Are these barriers the same as for parents on behalf of their children? Please feel free to send responses, comments, thoughts, and ideas to the listserv administrator atkath@healthletter.com. If you send comments, we will follow up with your responses and ideas in the next listserv.

To subscribe or unsubscribe to the Listserv, please see the information at the bottom of the page, and pass the word to other staff in your clinic. **Immu-News** is available online at the Migrant Clinician Network’s website. Go to www.migrantclinician.org/immunizations.html

News Bulletin from CDC

It’s back to school season! Please remind parents to schedule a medical check-up for their 11 and 12 year olds and get them vaccinated against serious diseases such as pertussis, meningitis, influenza, and, for girls, cervical cancer. **CDC’s Pre-teen Vaccine Campaign** has updated existing education materials in English and Spanish for parents on the importance of a yearly check-up and recommended vaccines, as well as developed new education materials for Native American parents. Materials in Korean and Vietnamese will also be available in October 2009. Please visit the Pre-

teen Vaccine Campaign gallery to download or order materials at NO COST:
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/spec-grps/preteens-adol/07gallery/default.htm>

Part Two: Vaccine-Hesitant Patients—What’s a Provider to Do?

Two recent articles in the medical literature point to the importance of providing patients and parents with science-based information about vaccines, including communicating with parents about the serious consequences of choosing not to vaccinate their children. According to a recent article in the May 2009 issue of BMC Public Health, when parents scored well on a test of vaccine knowledge, their children were more likely to be on schedule with their immunizations, which suggested to the researchers that if doctors do more to inform parents about vaccine effectiveness and safety, they will be more likely to keep their children on the recommended schedule. Also, in the June issue of Pediatrics, **researchers found that parental refusal of pertussis vaccination is associated with an increased risk of pertussis infection in children.** They found that the unvaccinated children were about 23 times more likely than vaccinated children to get whooping cough.

Further Reading

1. Parental Knowledge of Paediatric Vaccination Borrás E, et al. BMC Public Health. 2009 May 27;9:154.
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19473498>
2. Parental Refusal of Pertussis Vaccination Is Associated with an Increased Risk of Pertussis Infection in Children
Glanz JM, et al. Pediatrics 2009 Jun;123(6):1446-51
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19482753>

Please note: only the abstract is available unless you have a subscription to Pediatrics

**Adult Clients --
what are the barriers and what are the strategies for providers
when it comes to adult clients?**

The reasons adults have for not getting vaccinated may be different from parents' hesitation on the part of their children. Our clinics have reported on some of the barriers they have heard about from their adult patients:

- Resistance due to cost.
- Needle opposition.
- “If I don't have to get the shot [for work] then I don't want it.”
- Patients are scared about missing work; they do not want a shot because it is painful and it may disrupt their work.
- Lack of knowledge about adult vaccines. Have not heard that vaccines are also for adults.
- Find hesitation most among adult Hispanic male patients.

We guess that some of the reason for the latter is that women receive vaccines as adults when they are pregnant as well as postpartum. They are more familiar with the idea of adults getting vaccines, and the vaccine may have been introduced to them in the context of a concrete and tangible result: mothers will be protecting their children from illnesses that could have been carried into the household by the mothers

Here are three articles that discuss adult vaccines and some of the barriers mentioned above.

1. Vaccinations in Adults: Missed Opportunities Editorial, Richard K. Zimmerman and Judith Ball, American Family Physician, September 15, 1998. <http://www.aafp.org/afp/980915ap/edit.html>
2. Attitudes of US obstetricians toward a combined tetanus-diphtheria-acellular pertussis vaccine for adults. Clark SJ Infectious Diseases in Obstetrics and Gynecology Volume 2006, Article ID 87040, Pages 1–5
<http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/picrender.fcgi?artid=1779616&blobtype=pdf>
3. Community and patient values for preventing herpes zoster. Lieu TA, Ortega-Sanchez I, Ray GT, Rusinak D, Yih WK, Choo PW, Shui I, Kleinman K, Harpaz R, Prosser LA. Pharmacoeconomics. 2008;26(3):235-49.
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez>
- 4.

Please note: only the abstract is available

Tips from the field

1. Know your clinic's policy regarding vaccine fees.
2. If your clinic doesn't provide vaccines, know where in your area your client can go for vaccines, especially if they are free. Provide clients with phone numbers and directions, in Spanish.
3. An example from East Georgia Health Care: provide outreach, if possible, to the workplace. EGHC, while it cannot provide vaccinations in the field, does send staff to workplaces, and the staff provides education about vaccines and information about where to go to get them.
4. Educate! Every conversation about education may increase comfort level and familiarity with the idea of adult vaccinations, and can help increase the value to the tipping point of action. Be prepared with a couple of standard lines about why vaccines are important:
 - a. an hour of your time now could save you weeks of work. Instead of getting sick and having to stay home, you will be able to work.
 - b. You can keep your family from getting sick as well, if you don't bring sickness home with you. By getting the vaccine yourself, you are providing some protection for your children.
5. More on education from the Community Health Partnership of Illinois: "No matter what, we want to make sure we educate our patients... Just because we can't offer the vaccine doesn't mean we should not screen for it... Patients deserve to know what they need... If we stress education and the importance of getting vaccinated, the patient is likely to seek vaccination elsewhere."
6. Advice from La Clínica de Baldwin in Foley, Alabama: listen to your patients concerns and then work to educate them. La Clinica's goal is to educate their patients about vaccines so they can make their own, informed decisions.

Immu-News is a project of the Migrant Clinicians Network. The Immunization Initiative is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Immu-News Listserv is a support service for clinics participating in the project. This is a post-only listserv, and postings will come from Immunization Initiative staff about once a month. If others at your clinic would like to be on the listserv, or if you have questions about the listserv or resources listed here, or if you would like to add something to the posts, please contact Kathryn Anderson, administrator, at kath@healthletter.com. You can also contact the listserv administrator if you would like to subscribe or unsubscribe from the list.