



CVP Update



Recommend Influenza Vaccine



It may seem as if flu season should be over. Yet, flu often peaks in February, with cases continuing until spring. Influenza infections and hospitalizations increased during December 2021. If your practice is not currently providing flu vaccines, consider referring people to another practice or pharmacy. You can also refer them to [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to search for a vaccinator. You are your patient's most trusted source of information, advice, and reassurance. Continue to recommend flu vaccine to patients who have not received one this season.

The [Weekly National Influenza \(Flu\) Vaccination Dashboard](#) is designed to share preliminary weekly influenza vaccination data including coverage estimates using existing and new data sources. The data will be updated regularly throughout the 2021-2022 influenza season as new data become available.

Visit: [Families Fighting Flu](#) and check out the blog posts for Black History Month to recognize Black pioneers in medicine and science.

In this Issue:

- [Recommend Influenza Vaccine](#) P.1
- [Are your patients behind on routine vaccinations?](#) P.1
- [Covid-19 Vaccine Updates](#) P.1
- [Planning for COVID-19 vaccines for children 6 months to 4 years](#) P.2
- [Benefits of IIS like CT WiZ](#) P.2
- [Quick Reminders](#) P.2
- [Employee Spotlight](#) P.3
- [IZ Getway Data Exchange](#) P.3
- [CT WiZ Public Portal Update](#) P.3
- [Data Quality Corner](#) P.4

COVID-19 Vaccine Updates:

The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is now available for ages 5 and older. Additionally, teens ages 12 and older are now recommended to receive a booster dose of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine 5 months after the last dose in their primary series. View the [CDC's COVID-19 Vaccines chart](#) and the FDA's booster chart below. If parents have questions about getting their child vaccinated, you can refer them to our [COVID-19 Vaccine for Children](#) webpage where they can find providers, answers to FAQs and more! Vaccine locations can also easily be found through [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov).

Do I qualify for a COVID-19 vaccine booster and which one?			
Which primary vaccine series did you complete?	Pfizer-BioNTech	Moderna	Janssen (J&J)
You can get a booster if:	It's been at least 5 months since completing a primary series AND you are:	It's been at least 5 months since completing a primary series AND you are:	It's been at least 2 months since completing primary vaccination AND you are:
	Age 12+	Age 18+	Age 18+
If eligible, you can get a booster of:	Pfizer-BioNTech* Moderna Janssen (J&J) <small>*Only Pfizer-BioNTech can be used as a booster in those age 12-17.</small>	Moderna Pfizer-BioNTech Janssen (J&J)	Janssen (J&J) Pfizer-BioNTech Moderna

For more information, visit www.fda.gov/covid19vaccines.

Follow us on Social Media!



Facebook:
[@CTPublicHealth](#)



Twitter:
[@CTDPH](#)

Contact Us:
860-509-7929
or [click here](#)

For a current list of IAP Contacts, Map and Social Media visit [Immune Action Plan \(IAP\)](#)

Planning for COVID-19 Vaccines for Children aged 6 months through 4 years

Authorization for COVID-19 vaccination for children aged 6 months through 4 years could come in early spring. DPH encourages all providers enrolled to administer COVID-19 vaccines to start planning for the potential of hosting clinics this spring for this age group.



When planning for these clinics, remember to allow for social distancing and have a plan for the [15 minute observation period post-vaccination](#). To allow for social distancing and the observation period, you might want to consider hosting outdoor clinics—better weather is coming soon! You may also want to think of creative ways to make the clinic more kid-friendly to make children and their parents more comfortable receiving an immunization in this setting. One available option is to [order free immunization coloring books](#) from DPH to keep the children occupied while waiting at your clinic.

Are you still not enrolled in the CoVP Program? Learn how to start the process [to enroll in CoVP](#).



The Immunization Action Coalition (IAC) has rebranded and is now [Immunize.org!](#)

NEW! COVID-19 Educational Materials [available to order!](#)

- 9 Reasons Your Child Should Get the COVID-19 Vaccine
- The COVID-19 Vaccine and Your Child



Benefits of Immunization Information Systems (IIS) like CT WiZ!

[CT WiZ](#) is a secure, statewide Immunization Information System (IIS) designed to meet national IIS standards. Only [authorized users](#) are allowed access to CT WiZ and the information is **confidential** as required by Connecticut law. IIS, like CT WiZ, offer key features

that work together to keep our communities healthy and improve public health!

- **Provides consolidated immunization records** to let providers know the full picture of which vaccines the patient received across providers in the system, helping to prevent under/over-vaccination, and to let the public securely access their own records through the Public Portal, and to let school nurses know a student's vaccines are up to date for school requirements.
- **Manages vaccine inventory** in one system.
- **Minimizes waste** by ensuring all vaccines are accounted for and preventing administration of unnecessary doses.
- **Forecasts immunizations** to alert providers in managing a patient's immunization schedule.
- **Spotlights areas of need** by providing a clear view of population-level vaccine coverage to assess communities at risk.
- **Expedites response in an outbreak** to enable assessment of vaccination status.

Are your patients behind on their routine vaccinations?

Please review your roster or run the CT WiZ Patient Reminder/Recall report to see which children are behind on their vaccinations and remind them the time to be vaccinated is now.

For CT WiZ trainings on how to run these reports, visit:

[CT WiZ Patient Management](#)

- [How to run a reminder recall report](#)
- [How to use the Recommender](#)



Employee Spotlight



Patricia Firmender, Epidemiologist & Vaccine Preventable Disease Coordinator
 Patricia Firmender is an Epidemiologist at the Connecticut Department of Public Health. She has been with the Immunization Program since 2015 and recently became the Vaccine Preventable Disease Coordinator. She received her Bachelor of Science in Public Health from Southern CT State University, where she was the recipient of the Dr. A. Kay Keiser Valedictory award. She later received a Master of Public Health degree from Boston University. Before joining DPH, she spent time working for Danbury Hospital and did some work with the Emerging Infection Program’s (EIP) HPV-IMPACT study. In her spare time, Patricia enjoys discovering new things with her toddler, aerial hoop and silks, crocheting, completing New York Times Sunday crossword puzzles (in pen), and exploring local craft breweries. She also has a minor obsession with fantasy books, movies, and games and plans to support Ravenclaw in the Inter-House Quidditch Cup.

IZ Gateway Data Exchange:

The [Immunization \(IZ\) Gateway](#) is a hub that enables efficient data exchange between critical immunization information systems (such as CT WiZ) across the nation. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) collaborated with the Department of Health and Human Services to expand the IZ Gateway for data sharing as listed below.

- **Connect: National Provider Organizations to Multiple IISs**
 Benefits: Ensures multiple IISs receive patient’s full immunization history from multijurisdictional provider organizations by providing a centralized data exchange connection.
- **Share: Cross Jurisdictional IIS to IIS** Benefits: Automates sending information to an IIS for patients immunized outside of their jurisdiction for more complete and accurate assessment of vaccination coverage is available.
- **Provider-Initiated Multijurisdictional Data Exchange**
 Benefits: Enables provider organizations to query multiple IISs for consolidated vaccine records from multiple states.

Data use Agreements must be executed by the jurisdictions (such as the Connecticut Department of Public Health) before data are exchanged. Data are shared in accordance with signed user agreements, the Governor’s Executive Order [EO13C](#) and [state law and regulations](#) in Connecticut. Per state law and regulations, CT WiZ data are confidential and available only to [authorized users](#) for the benefits as listed above and below.

CT WiZ Public Portal Update – SMART Health Cards/QR Codes Now Available!



Patients (18+) and parents/legal guardians of minors (under 18) can access their official immunization records for themselves and their children through the online secure [CT WiZ Public Portal](#).

Once two-factor authentication is complete, patients can choose to download either their full immunization record or their COVID-19 only record. The COVID-19 record now contains a QR code that is a [SMART Health Card](#) that can be scanned by participating businesses (such as airlines and large venues) to verify someone’s COVID-19 vaccination status.

REMINDER: The CT WiZ Public Portal requires an **email or mobile phone** for the ‘two-factor authentication’ to verify the identity of the requestor. At each vaccination visit, providers should confirm/update this contact information in the CT WiZ user interface or in your EHR (if onboarded with CT WiZ) to ensure your patients will have access to get their records in the public portal at their convenience.



Data Quality (DQ) Corner

How does 'bi-directional data exchange' improve data quality?

Clinics can onboard their electronic health record (EHR) with CT WiZ for bi-directional or uni-directional data exchange with CT WiZ.

- CT WiZ follows national standards for onboarding EHRs.
- Bi-directional: enables two-way (Query and Response) communication between your EHR and CT WiZ.
- Uni-directional: enables one-way (Reporting) communication from your EHR to CT WiZ.
- 83% of onboarded clinics are actively using bi-directional, as opposed to uni-directional. If your clinic is not yet onboarded, or wishes to set up bi-directional, **please visit [Electronic Health Records](#)** and for help please [submit a helpdesk request](#).

Querying CT WiZ can:

- Electronically find matching patients and import missing doses into your EHR.
- Enable you to view vaccine recommendations before administering a dose to ensure patients are up to date.

Please remember:

- Querying provides a snapshot of the patient's information from CT WiZ at that moment.
 - ◇ For example, the patient address is updated every time a new EHR/HL7 message is submitted to CT WiZ according to the type of address, mailing or physical.
- To increase chances of finding a patient match:
 - ◇ Use the patient's legal name.
 - ◇ Do not enter both the first and middle name into the first name field.
 - ◇ If you use the CT WiZ patient ID to match with your Medical Record Number, keep in mind that the CT WiZ ID can change. If DPH merges a duplicate patient in CT WIZ, it will create a new CT WiZ ID.
- Reviewing your 'Monthly ACK Summary Reports' from DPH can help ensure your HL7 messages are sent to CT WiZ correctly.
 - ◇ Errors on this report could require more training with your staff on how data is being captured or entered (such as Race/Ethnicity)
 - ◇ Errors on this report could be a technical issue with how HL7 messages are reported and these may need to be corrected in your EHR interface.



If you would like to unsubscribe from these communications, please send an email to Dph.immunizations@ct.gov with the subject line "Unsubscribe from CVP Program communications".