

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Renée D. Coleman-Mitchell, MPH
Commissioner



Ned Lamont
Governor
Susan Bysiewicz
Lt. Governor

Immunization Program

May 7, 2020

Dear Immunization Providers,

The Connecticut Department of Public Health's Immunization Program has received numerous inquiries from healthcare providers asking if immunization rates have declined since the start of COVID-19. This, of course, is an extremely important question, and one that we should be able to answer in real time, with as much precision as possible. Assessment of vaccine coverage is key not only to assessing the risk of vaccine preventable diseases, but also to facilitating catch up of individual children who have fallen behind on their immunizations. Catch up should be as rapid as possible using every available means to do so.

We need your help to do this. At the state level, we can only determine if immunization rates are declining if immunizations administered are reported to Connecticut's statewide Immunization Information System (IIS), CT WiZ, in real time by all healthcare providers, for all children. Real time reporting of immunizations can be accomplished by establishing an HL7 interface through an EHR (Electronic Health Record) after "onboarding", or by direct data entry into the web-based CT WiZ user interface; **to date, there are about 150 practices (24%) reporting immunizations in real time.** Real time data reporting to CT WiZ can support the efficient and rapid catch up of children on needed routine immunizations utilizing centralized reminder recall of patients overdue for immunizations.

In addition to routine immunizations, we must also turn our attention to planning and preparing for the distribution and administration of a COVID-19 vaccine. It is the Department's understanding that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) plans to leverage state IIS to facilitate the distribution of COVID-19 vaccine, along with the reporting of all doses administered. Connecticut Department of Public Health (CTDPH) is continuing to work with healthcare providers across the state to get everyone who is able onboarded for real time reporting either through an HL7 interface or through the user interface, to ensure that the State of Connecticut is ready to respond when the COVID-19 vaccine is released.



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All providers with an EHR are encouraged to contact their vendor now to discuss the feasibility of establishing an HL7 interface because the onboarding process can take several weeks to successfully move through the phases and into production. An HL7 interface is the quickest and easiest method for reporting doses administered to CT WiZ. Once your EHR has onboarded with CT WiZ, CTDPH will invite you to register for training on how to order and manage your CVP supplied vaccines in CT WiZ.

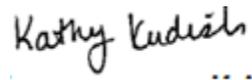
- **For how to set up the HL7 interface for EHR data exchange, visit:**
<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Immunizations/Electronic-Health-Record-Electronic-Exchange-With-CT-WiZ>

All providers without an EHR, or whose EHR is not yet ready to report electronically, are encouraged to register for training on the user interface to order and manage CVP supplied vaccines and report patient level doses administered.

- **For how to register for your Direct Data Entry “live” webinar training, visit:**
<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Immunizations/CT-WiZ-Training>

In these challenging times, you can rely on the automated platform of CT WiZ and its myriad of features and capabilities to support efforts to bring children up to date on needed vaccinations and for statewide distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine when available. In the interim, we encourage you to initiate the enrollment process to maintain complete, accurate, and secure immunization records for all Connecticut residents.

Sincerely,



Kathy Kudish, DVM, MSPH
Immunization Program Manager
Connecticut Department of Public Health