



CVP Update



Respiratory Virus Season is Here

It's time to vaccinate against influenza, COVID-19 and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)!

As we begin this season, providers should make a strong recommendation for all recommended vaccines and begin tailored messaging to children and parents. As in previous years, flu and COVID-19 vaccines can be given at the same visit.



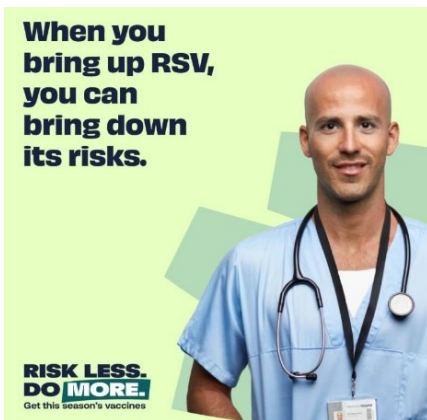
Flu: This season's influenza vaccines are trivalent formulations. Young children who need two doses should get the first dose as soon as possible. As a reminder, influenza vaccine is required for children attending day care/preschool 6–59 months of age. These children must have an annual dose of flu vaccine administered between August 1st–December 31st.

View the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention's (CDC) [Seasonal Flu Partner Resources Center](#) for communication resources for the flu season.

COVID-19: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved and authorized the updated 2024–2025 COVID-19 vaccines, and they are available for ordering. Everyone ages 6 months and older should get a 2024–2025 COVID-19 vaccine. This includes people who have received one or more COVID-19 vaccines previously and people who have had COVID-19.



View CDC's [Staying Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines](#) webpage for more information.



RSV: RSV is the most common cause of hospitalization in infants and can cause serious illness and death in infants and young children. Severe RSV lower respiratory tract infection in infants can be prevented either by administering monoclonal antibody products (nirsevimab) to infants and young children, or by administering RSV vaccine during pregnancy. While the timing of the onset and duration of RSV season may vary, nirsevimab may be administered October through the end of March.

For more information view CDC's [RSV Immunization for Children 19 Months and Younger](#).

In this Issue:

Respiratory Virus Season	P.1
Provider Spotlight	P.2
Data Quality Corner	P.2
Employee Spotlight	P.3
Vaccine Preventable Diseases	P.3
Vaccine Confidence Training	P.4
IAP Team Gathers In-Person	P.4
Celebrate 30 Years of VFC	P.4
Re-Enrollment Coming Soon	P.4

Follow us on Social Media!



Facebook:

[@CTPublicHealth](#)



X (Twitter):

[@CTDPH](#)



Instagram:

[@ctdph](#)

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

View the IAP Contacts here:
[Immunization Action Plan \(IAP\)](#)

Respiratory Viral Disease Surveillance Data

To view national respiratory illness surveillance you can visit the CDC's [Respiratory Illnesses Data Channel](#).

To view Connecticut data for viral respiratory diseases, the 2024–2025 Weekly Viral Respiratory Disease Update Dashboard will be posted on [Respiratory Viral Disease Surveillance \(ct.gov\)](#) in early October. This data will be updated weekly on Thursdays.

Provider Spotlight

Dr. Fred Santoro



In September, the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) honored Dr. Fred Santoro as **Connecticut's 2024 Immunization Champion** for being innovative in his approach to getting children vaccinated and for putting accessibility at the forefront of practice, particularly for seasonal influenza vaccination. This national award is presented by the Association of Immunization Managers (AIM) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and honors individuals from state, local, and territorial jurisdictions that have gone above and beyond to promote or foster immunizations in their community and exemplify one or more of the following criteria: leadership, collaboration, innovation, and advocacy.

Dr. Santoro operates his own pediatric practice where he provides care and education on vaccinations to countless children in an area of Connecticut considered a provider desert. He also served as the Chairman of Pediatrics at Lawrence & Memorial Hospital in New London, Connecticut for several years. In this role, he extended his influence beyond the children in his care to include children throughout Southeastern Connecticut. Dr. Santoro provided guidance and leadership for the hospital system, collaborating with various healthcare professionals to ensure high-quality care for patients. As a solo practitioner, Dr. Santoro is recognized for his advocacy of childhood vaccination, being among the first providers in Southeastern Connecticut to establish a vaccine policy for his practice and implement the CDC best-practice strategies for improving vaccination rates. Dr. Santoro was recently featured on Ledge Light Health District's "Health Watch" series advocating about immunizations. View the episode [here](#).

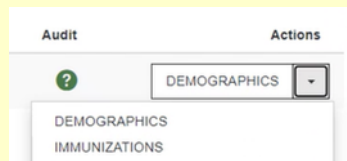
A small ceremony was held to honor Dr. Santoro, on Friday September 20th including Infectious Disease leadership and Immunization Program staff, Ledge Light Health District's Director and Immunization Action Plan (IAP) Coordinator and Dr. Santoro's family and staff members. We are proud to honor Dr. Santoro as our 2024 Immunization Champion! Thank you for all you do to championing vaccines!

To read Dr. Santoro's profile on the AIM website, and to learn more about AIM's Immunization Champion Award program, please visit [Champion Awards - Association of Immunization Managers](#).

Data Quality Corner

Reminder: Searching for a Patient

- If you search for a patient in CT WiZ, and 'double-click' in the gray shaded area with your cursor down in the search results, it brings you back to conduct another patient search.
- If you want to open up that patient record you initially found, please click on the Demographics button, or the down arrow to navigate to the Demographics screen or Immunizations screen. See the image below, and see [Search for and Edit Patient Records](#).



Reminder: Password Reset

- If you need to reset your CT WiZ password or you forgot your username, please see [CT WiZ Username Password Issues for Existing Accounts](#).
- Please do not request another username, as each user can only have one username.
- If you need support, please [submit a request to our Helpdesk](#).

Employee Spotlight



Deepa Mavani, MPH Interim Immunization Program Manager, Adult Immunization, Quality Improvement Coordinator

Deepa Mavani has been with the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) for the past seven years. She began in 2017 as a Health Program Assistant, working with CVP providers in "Region 3," assisting with vaccine orders and management. She then transitioned to the role of Epidemiologist, where she conducted provider site visits, modernized and publicly disseminated annual school survey data, and implemented quality improvement initiatives. During the pandemic, Deepa played a crucial role in leading the COVID-19 vaccine program rollout and continues to engage with stakeholders and the community to ensure equitable access to vaccines for all ages across the state.

Recently, Deepa has stepped into the role of interim Immunization Program Manager, ensuring the program runs smoothly until a permanent hire is made. She holds a BS and an MPH from UCONN and is currently pursuing a PhD in Public Health, focusing on using social behavioral change theories to boost vaccine confidence and equity.

Outside of work, Deepa enjoys cooking, crafting, Netflix-binging, reading, and traveling. Her recent adventures include a trip to Italy, (where she learned how to make pasta!) and a Mediterranean cruise, with plans to visit Iceland and Paris during the holidays, followed by a trip to India in January to attend a "big fat Indian wedding". She also treasures spending time with her family and friends, balancing a personal and professional life.

Deepa's dedication to public health and her rich personal interests make her a valued member of the DPH team!



Vaccine Preventable Diseases – Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

There has been a statewide increase in pertussis cases since the beginning of this year. Since January 1, 2024, 208 cases of pertussis (as of 9/24) have been identified compared to 11 cases in all of 2023. Because of the increase in cases, DPH is reminding health care providers that pertussis may present similarly to other respiratory illnesses like influenza, RSV, and COVID-19. Community providers should consider pertussis in the absence of a more likely diagnosis, when evaluating any patient with the clinical symptoms below:

- History of cough illness lasting 14 or more days with at least one of the following symptoms:
 - a. Paroxysms of cough; or
 - b. Inspiratory whoop; or
 - c. Post-tussive vomiting; or
 - d. Apnea (with or without cyanosis)

Clinicians should strongly consider initiating treatment prior to test results if there is strong clinical history suggestive of pertussis, if the person is at high risk of severe disease or if the person has contact with someone at high risk of severe disease. Patients diagnosed with pertussis should be counseled to stay at home until they have completed 5 days of appropriate antibiotics.

For more information about testing, treatment, recommendations for vaccination and reporting requirements please see the [pertussis advisory](#) sent out to Connecticut healthcare providers in August.

Vaccine Confidence Training Opportunity

The American Academy of Pediatrics, in partnership with CDC and Bodyswaps, launched a free virtual reality module, [Increasing Immunization Confidence](#). In this immersive and interactive learning module, learners join a virtual pediatric clinic and engage in immunization scenarios with parents who are hesitant about vaccinating their children and adolescents.

Across the series of activities offered in this module, learners will have an increased understanding of how to:

- Establish a culture that promotes immunization confidence
- Open the conversation with a strong recommendation using the presumptive format
- Respond with empathy to concerns about immunization using motivational interviewing
- Tailor their communication to different individuals and situations

The Immunization Action Plan (IAP) Team Gathers In-Person

In June, Immunization Program staff and the [IAP and COVID-19 IAP \(CAP\)](#) staff from across the state gathered together for our first in-person meeting since the pandemic. The meeting was an opportunity for our local IAP and CAP Coordinators to discuss highlights of the programs and activities they are implementing in their local communities. We also celebrated 30 years of the IAP (and Vaccines for Children) program!

In September, we came together again to discuss recent vaccine updates, hear from vaccine manufacturers and prepare for the upcoming respiratory virus season. We are so proud of the hard work our IAPs do every day at the local level to raise immunization rates! We strongly encourage providers to collaborate with IAPs as much as possible. If you're unsure if your area has an IAP Coordinator, please check our [IAP contact list and map](#) to find out!



Virtual Celebration of 30 Years of Vaccine for Children (VFC) Program

On October 1, 1994, the first vaccinations were delivered by the VFC Program. Please join national leaders on **October 1, 2024, at 2 pm** to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the launch of



Immunizations protect America's children every day

CDC estimates that vaccination of children born between 1994 and 2023 will:

- **Prevent** more than 500 million illnesses
- **Avoid** more than 1 million deaths
- **Save** nearly \$3 trillion

bit.ly/mm733162
AUGUST 8, 2024

this extraordinary program. We will hear from key leaders and partners who together support the program credited with saving over 1.1 million lives, preventing 508 million illnesses, and saving more than \$2.7 trillion.

[Register here](#) to celebrate a program all Americans and can be proud of.

Annual Re-Enrollment Coming Soon

The annual Connecticut Vaccine Program (CVP) and Connecticut Vaccines for Adults Program (CVFA) re-enrollment period is coming up! Please keep an eye out for a communication in the next few weeks with more details. As a reminder, re-enrollments are done electronically in CT WiZ and will be due in December.