



CVP Update

Keeping Connecticut Kids Healthy



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National Influenza Vaccination Week

December 2-6th is National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW)! This week is an annual observance to remind everyone 6 months and older that there's still time to protect themselves and their loved ones from flu by getting their annual flu vaccine if they have not already.

Vaccination is particularly important for people who are at higher risk of developing serious flu complications, including pregnant people and young children. Millions of children get sick with flu every year, and thousands will be hospitalized as a result. Pregnant people are also at higher risk of developing serious flu complications. CDC data shows that flu vaccination coverage was lower last season, especially among certain higher risk groups, including children.

Remind patients at your practice to get their annual flu vaccine by sharing this message through your patient portal or other communication methods.

Has your child gotten their annual flu vaccine yet? There's still time! Every year flu puts thousands of children in the hospital. Getting your child a flu vaccine can lessen flu's more serious symptoms – reducing the risk of serious illness and flu-related hospitalization if they do get sick. Call our office at [PHONE NUMBER] to schedule their vaccine today!

View and share the NIVW events happening across the state posted on our website under events!



Data Quality Corner



Did you know?

Upon login to CT WiZ, you can read the NEWS of important tips and reminders!



Tip:

 When creating a reconciliation.

- CT WiZ will default to the current date/time.
- You can select any time between the current time back to midnight (if current day was selected) or any time (if previous day was selected).



Reminder:

 Security is a top priority and CT WiZ is continuously monitored to ensure security of data.

- Please review: [How to Report a Cyber Threat Incident to Ensure Security](#) for the process to submit a helpdesk ticket to CT WiZ if needed, and our team will provide additional support.

NEW: URLs for VIS in the Vaccine Code Sets changing on January 17, 2025

Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) codes in the vaccine code sets enable provider systems to capture the specific VIS document edition given to recipients or caregivers. The URLs in the vaccine code sets point to the current VIS edition document.



- All URLs for current VIS documents were changed with the new CDC.gov website implementation.
- **Effective January 17, 2025, the old URLs will no longer redirect, and all remaining active VIS editions will use the new URLs.** The vaccine code sets will be updated to include only the new URLs.
- **Providers may choose to update their systems to use new URLs before January 17.** See additional information in the [New VIS URL Table](#).

Vaccine Data Requests

Do you need assistance with vaccination data?

In our CT WiZ [Helpdesk](#) there is a **NEW Category "Data Request"** with 3 Topics:

- Data Requests by Local Health Departments/Districts
- Data Requests by Other
- Data Requests by Vaccinating Providers

* - Required Field

What system do you need assistance with?	Immunizations (CT WiZ) ▼ *
Select the category:	Data Request ▼ *
Select the topic:	Data Requests by Vaccinating Clinics ▼ *
Select the sub topic:	Select a sub topic... ▼

Please read this information about available data before submitting a ticket.

Vaccinating clinics can run their own reports on their clinics/ their patients.

- Click [here](#) to access a manual that provides clinic users with an overview of selected reports that are commonly used in CT WiZ.

Childhood Vaccination Rates

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released updated National Vaccination Coverage by Age 24 Months and Kindergarten Vaccination Coverage Reports. You can view this data in two Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports (MMWRs).

1. [Decline in Vaccination Coverage by Age 24 Months and Vaccination Inequities Among Children Born in 2020 and 2021 – National Immunization Survey-Child, United States, 2021–2023 | MMWR](#)

- Nationally, estimated coverage with most childhood vaccines was lower among children born during 2020–2021 (during or after the height of the health care disruption from the COVID-19 pandemic) compared with those born during 2018–2019. Disparities by race and ethnicity, health insurance status, poverty status, and urbanicity persist. Coverage also varied widely by jurisdiction, especially for influenza vaccine.
- Financial barriers, access issues, vaccine hesitancy, and vaccine-related misinformation all need to be overcome to increase coverage, ensure full recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, eliminate disparities, and protect all children from vaccine-preventable diseases.

2. [Coverage with Selected Vaccines and Exemption Rates Among Children in Kindergarten – United States, 2023–24 School Year | MMWR](#)

• **Coverage Rates Highlights:**

- From the 2019–20 to the 2022–23 school year, national kindergarten coverage with state-required vaccinations declined from 95% to approximately 93%.
- In Connecticut, our coverage rates for Kindergartners increased from the 22–23 to 23–24 school years and remain above the national average.
- Connecticut is among the top 3 states for Kindergartners being up to date with 2 doses of MMR vaccine at 97.7%, just behind Maryland (99.1) and West Virginia (98.3).

• **Exemption Rates Highlights:**

- Connecticut has the lowest rate of non-medical exemptions. CT's medical exemptions went up 0.1% and non-medical exemptions went down 0.4% from the 22–23 to 23–24 school years.
- Decreasing vaccination coverage and increasing exemptions increase the risk for vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks. Efforts by health departments, schools, and providers are needed to ensure that students begin school fully vaccinated.

CVP Vaccine Reminders

Holiday Shortened Vaccine Shipping Schedule: The CVP reminds providers that with the upcoming Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays McKesson, Merck and Pfizer will have a shortened shipping schedule, so providers should be sure to order enough vaccines to get them through the holiday season.

COVID-19 Vaccine Reminder: Providers should also be stocking some COVID-19 vaccine in their inventory at all times. We are continuing to see an increased demand for pediatric COVID-19 doses from parents statewide. As a reminder, COVID-19 vaccine is not part of the vaccine restitution policy so any unused doses will not have to be replaced.



Nursing Home Outreach

In November, the CT DPH Immunization Program was happy to attend a conference for Connecticut nursing homes' Administrators and Directors of Nursing to provide immunization education and resources to help ensure nursing home residents are up-to-date on all recommended immunizations!

Provider Spotlight

Kathy Neelon, RN



Improving children’s health is no easy task, but Kathy Neelon has been up for the challenge in Wallingford Public Schools (WPS) for the last 20 years. Neelon served as School Nurse Supervisor and Coordinator for WPS, where she oversaw all school nurses within the Wallingford school district. In addition to serving as a resource and supervisor for 21 nurses and 8 supporting staff, Kathy also served as a health advisor for the school district, further demonstrating her dedication to the health of the children in Wallingford.

Kathy has a Masters in Healthcare Administration, which she credits with helping her to improve and streamline the school health system. In her time with WPS, she worked hard to develop processes to organize the response to health issues within a school setting by developing protocols and standard operating procedures for the nurses to follow.

Throughout her career, Kathy stayed dedicated to protecting the health of children. Kathy stressed the importance of immunizations in schools, and our collective responsibility to protect students and staff from preventable illnesses. During her time at the school district, she worked collaboratively with school administrators to reinforce the importance of immunization requirements, stressing that preventable illness affects attendance and ultimately school performance. Kathy also worked with students in difficult situations, including those who were unstably housed and those who recently immigrated to the United States, to protect their health by getting them up-to-date on their immunizations.

While maintaining students’ immunization records to ensure they were accurate and compliant with state requirements was one of Kathy’s many responsibilities, it is one she was highly passionate about, which led Wallingford Public Schools to be among the first school districts to use CT WiZ for tracking students’ immunization records. Kathy credits CT WiZ with being one of the best things they have used in the last 20 years, emphasizing that CT WiZ saved her hours of work every week.

Kathy credits collaboration with others as being a great driver of success. Kathy’s advice for others would be to listen and collaborate with others, to have a good sense of humor, and to be flexible! We wish her a happy retirement and thank her for an incredible 20 years of service!

Follow us on social media!



Employee Spotlight

Jack King, Data Scientist

Jack received his Bachelor of Science in Neuroscience from the University of Vermont and his MPH from Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia. He began his public health career as an analyst for a community mental health center in Los Angeles County. Jack has been working at CT DPH since 2020. He was initially hired as an epidemiologist in the environmental health section and has also worked in chronic disease epidemiology. In March 2024 he joined the Immunization Program as a data scientist. He likes to use his skills to inform coworkers doing the vital work on the front lines. In his free time, Jack likes to explore back roads on his bicycle and read all genres of books.

