



Immunization Program Provider Spotlight October 2022

Gregory McKenna, Nutmeg Pharmacy

From nursing homes to dance studios to schools and homes, Greg McKenna was there setting an example of breaking down barriers to access by vaccinating populations where they were. In August, Greg was named our 2022 Connecticut Immunization Champion for his exemplary job in promoting and fostering adult and childhood immunizations in Connecticut, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. He worked with local politicians and town leaders to compile a list of every senior citizen in the town of his pharmacy, as well as a few surrounding towns, and reached out to every person to schedule them for a clinic to get their COVID-19 vaccine. For those who were unable to come to the pharmacy, Greg and his staff went to their home or other location to give them the vaccine. He went to great lengths to service home bound, medically desolate individuals, those in group homes, and individuals in congregate settings, such as homeless shelters or low-income housing.

Greg is an active collaborator in his community and beyond. He and his staff went into schools to vaccinate teachers and children, not only ensuring they were protected against COVID-19, but also reinforcing the responsibility community members have to help each other get through the pandemic. When talking about his experience in schools, Greg stated “We saw teachers getting vaccines while kids were getting vaccines while the parents were getting vaccines and we realized it was a we, together. We were going to get through this together. It wasn’t I... we were protecting ourselves together. It was phenomenal.” Greg also collaborated with the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health and the National Guard to vaccinate vulnerable populations in nursing homes, assisted living, and residential care facilities. Greg also collaborated with DPH to serve as a hub for vaccine storage and redistribution before there was a mass redistribution model to ensure immunization access.

Beyond his collaborations, Greg is also innovative in his education and advocacy. He writes in his local paper about health issues, including immunizations, to educate his community and even filmed video messages for his patients during the pandemic to provide them up-to-date information on COVID-19 immunizations. Greg has been a champion for immunizations for many years. He has recognized that pharmacies have the unique ability to be a point of care that is accessible for people for their immunization needs, something he has demonstrated by expanding his community pharmacy to several locations in eastern Connecticut, filling a gap in a provider desert.

Greg and his staff reached a great quantity of Connecticut residents and ensured they were vaccinated against COVID-19, and while the doses he administered are quantifiable, the impact he has made on his community is immeasurable.

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Picture Description: Gregory McKenna with Commissioner Juthani and DPH Immunization Staff at 2022 Connecticut Immunization Champion Award Ceremony

From left to right: Natalie Anderson, Deepa Mavani, Kathy Kudish, Gregory McKenna, Commissioner Manisha Juthani.



Description: Presentation of the 2022 Connecticut Immunization Award to Gregory McKenna

From left to right: Commissioner Manish Juthani, Gregory McKenna, Kathy Kudish