In this edition of I Raise the Rates (IRtR), you will find a variety of new resources from several public health partners, educational opportunities, and a brief selection of popular media articles related to immunization.

Updates from the American College of Physicians (ACP)

Webinar Opportunity - COVID-19 Recovery: Increasing Adult Vaccinations

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on routine vaccination rates across all populations in the US. Primary care physicians play a critical role in recommending and administering adult immunizations. Strong recommendations and implementation of office-based practices (e.g., standing order protocols, reminder recall systems, etc.) greatly increase immunization rates for all adults.

Topics covered will include:

- Current ACIP recommendations for routine adult and COVID-19 vaccines;
- Rationale for raising immunization rates among patients with high-risk chronic conditions; and
- Identify practical strategies to increase vaccination rates in your practices

Register Today

ACP Calls for Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccinations for All Healthcare Workers

ACP is proud to join 50+ major health care professional organizations and
BioNTech Aims to Develop mRNA-Based Malaria Vaccine

BioNTech wants to build on its success in COVID-19 by developing the first vaccine for malaria based on mRNA technology and aims to start clinical testing by the end of 2022, in an attempt to eradicate the mosquito-borne illness.

The Mainz, a Germany-based company, which developed a COVID-19 vaccine with their partner Pfizer in ten months, said they are also exploring vaccine production in Africa as part of efforts to build up manufacturing capacity on the continent.

"The response to the pandemic has shown that science and innovation can transform people's lives when all key stakeholders work together towards a common goal," said BioNTech Chief Executive and co-founder Ugur Sahin.

Hospitals Offer Opportunity to Get Kids Vaccinated for Flu - Simple EHR Modifications Nearly Double Vax Rates

Small modifications to hospitals’ admission protocols and electronic health records (EHR) systems to promote kids’ influenza vaccinations markedly boosted immunizations, researchers found in a controlled trial.

In-hospital vaccinations had been given to 31% of eligible children targeted by the intervention in the 2019-2020 flu season, compared with 19% among similar children receiving usual care that season, according to Evan Orenstein, MD, of Emory University in Atlanta, and colleagues.
Why the CDC is Again Turning to Masks to Help Stop COVID-19

The expert physicians and scientists at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are recommending that Americans—even those who are fully immunized with one of the three safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines available in this country—wear masks in indoor public spaces if they live in areas with high or substantial rates of virus transmission.

The masks serve as another layer of protection against transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 Delta variant that now accounts for 80% of cases in the U.S. The CDC also is recommending that children, teachers, and staffers in K–12 schools across the nation wear masks in the coming school year, regardless of COVID-19 vaccination status. This brings the agency’s recommendations in line with those of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

FDA Approves GSK’s Shingles Vaccine for Immunocompromised Adults

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved GlaxoSmithKline’s (GSK) adjuvanted Zoster vaccine recombinant, Shingrix, to prevent herpes zoster (shingles) in immunocompromised people aged 18 years and above.

Shingrix consists of the glycoprotein E antigen along with an adjuvant system, AS01B, to produce an immune response specific to the varicella-zoster virus to overcome waning immunity as people grow old.

The non-live vaccine has been indicated for people at a higher risk of contracting shingles because of immunodeficiency or immunosuppression due to known disease or treatment.

HHS Announces Phase Two of HPV Vaccination Campaign for Young Adults
Currently, only 40% of young adults in the United States have received one or more doses of the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, and only 22% have completed the vaccine series. The HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health’s Office on Women's Health is launching the second phase of the HPV VAX NOW campaign to address this gap.

The initial campaign launched on January 6, 2021 to support healthcare providers who counsel young adults in Mississippi, South Carolina, and Texas by providing resources to promote effective HPV vaccine recommendations. The second phase of the campaign will target young adults ages 18–26 in the same three states, with the long-term goal of empowering all to complete the HPV vaccine series.

August is National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM)

August is National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM). This annual observance highlights the efforts of healthcare professionals to protect patients of all ages against vaccine-preventable diseases through on-time vaccination.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted all aspects of life, including patients’ ability to attend important appointments and receive routine vaccinations. Many patients had to postpone or cancel appointments and still may not have had the opportunity to catch back up on needed healthcare.

During NIAM, encourage your patients to schedule appointments to ensure they are up to date on annual exams and recommended vaccines. Research has consistently shown that healthcare professionals are the most trusted source of vaccine information for parents and patients.

Use NIAM as an opportunity to access CDC educational resources like the #HowIRecommend Video Series, which offers simple and practical guidance for having successful vaccine conversations with parents and patients. These short videos demonstrate how to make effective vaccine recommendations, address common vaccine questions, and take a team-based approach to vaccination.

For those patients who are eligible for COVID-19 vaccination, you play a critical role in helping vaccine recipients understand the importance of vaccination and that COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. Check out this
toolkit on Talking to Recipients about COVID-19 Vaccination, where you will find resources to help you share clear and accurate information about COVID-19 vaccines, raise awareness about the benefits of vaccination, and address common questions and concerns about what to expect when getting vaccinated.