

Immunization Quality Improvement for Providers (IQIP) promotes and supports the implementation of provider-level strategies designed to help increase on-time vaccination of children and adolescents. The IQIP core strategies call for quality improvement activities that focus on improvements to the vaccination workflow. IQIP supports both the implementation *and* improvement of these core strategies. If the practice already uses one of these strategies, IQIP can help to advance the efforts within that strategy.

Facilitate Return for Vaccination

Making vaccination more accessible by expanding practice hours available for appointments, allowing walk-in vaccination appointments, and ensuring the next vaccination appointment is scheduled before the patient leaves the office, are a few examples that can support parents in keeping their children on time for vaccination. Reminder and recall systems can also help reduce the likelihood of missed appointments.

Questions to Consider

How does your practice maintain accurate patient contact information? Are staff verifying and updating patient contact information at each appointment to support scheduling and reminder/recall efforts?

What steps does your practice take to prevent missed opportunities? Does staff routinely screen patients for vaccine eligibility at each visit regardless of visit type (e.g., sick visit, well-child, sports physicals, etc.); generate lists of patients that have upcoming appointments to view vaccines due using various technologies via EHR, IIS, or scheduling software platforms; and maintain accurate vaccination records?

Does your scheduling protocol ensure that appointments are scheduled for all future vaccines needed? Are you scheduling the next appointment (e.g., well-child visit, nurse-only, etc.) before the patient leaves the office, either in the exam room or at check-out; scheduling the next vaccination visit and the next well-child visit to occur the same day whenever possible; offering various types of appointments (e.g., nurse-only appointments, vaccination-only clinic days, etc.) where vaccinations can be administered?

How do you inform parents of future vaccine dates? Does staff give parents a copy of their current immunization record and a list of future recommended vaccines with precise due dates?

Does your practice implement reminder and recall systems? Are you using multiple methods (e.g., a combination of text messages, portal messages, e-mails, postcards, phone calls, etc.) to remind patients of upcoming appointments?

Leverage the Immunization Information System (IIS) to Improve Immunization Practice

Providers and patients can benefit from a well-maintained immunization information system (IIS). The IIS can provide consolidated vaccination records, forecast upcoming due dates to assist with scheduling, and send reminders for upcoming appointments. The IIS also helps providers to manage vaccine inventory and to self-monitor vaccination coverage to identify areas for improvement.

Questions to Consider

How does your practice maintain accurate patient contact information? Are you verifying and updating patient contact information in the IIS at each appointment to support scheduling, reminder, and recall efforts?

Are you routinely reporting to the IIS? Are you reporting all historical and administered vaccination data to the IIS to support complete, up-to-date patient records, vaccination recommendations, and coverage?

How often does your practice assess patient immunization status? Do clinicians assess immunization status in the IIS for patient active/inactive status and doses due at every patient encounter, including drop-ins and sick visits?

How is a patient's vaccination status communicated among staff during their visit? Do you use a prompt system to notify staff when vaccinations are due for every patient encounter, including drop-ins and sick visits?

How often does your practice attempt to bring patients without appointments back to the office for due or overdue vaccinations? Do staff routinely generate patient line lists to identify patients not up-to-date and overdue to determine future due dates for vaccines? Does your practice use reminder and recall functionality to communicate with patients about appointments (e.g., future well-child, vaccination-only, and follow-up sick appointments)?

How often does your practice assess its vaccination performance, and how? Does your practice generate practice-level coverage reports at regularly scheduled intervals for single vaccines and combination series for various age cohorts?

Give a Strong Vaccine Recommendation (include HPV vaccine if the provider has adolescent patients)

On-time vaccination depends on parents choosing to vaccinate their children, and providers play a critical role in leading parents to that decision. Parents usually consider their child's healthcare professional one of the most trusted vaccine information sources. This IQIP strategy focuses on the provider-parent and provider-patient discussion. Selection of this strategy can support your clinic with training and resources focused on the evidence-based presumptive (or "announcement") approach for vaccine recommendation.

Questions to Consider

Do you use evidence-based methods when recommending vaccines? Do prescribers use effective communication approaches (e.g., presumptive language, bundling approach, sandwiching recommendations, etc.) when recommending vaccines?

Do you recommend all vaccines for which the patient is eligible? Do prescribers prevent missed opportunities by recommending all vaccines when they are due and recommending multiple vaccines simultaneously if the ACIP schedule indicates the patient is due for more than one vaccine at the time of the visit?

What approaches do you use to build trust with parents? Do you seek to understand the concerns behind parents' questions before responding? Willingness to listen and acknowledge parents' concerns plays a role in developing trust.

How do you ensure you are reaching all parents and patients equally? Does your practice take actions to reduce disparities / promote vaccine equity by training prescribers to recognize the diversity within their community and acknowledge the systemic, cultural, and historical reasons some patients may have low confidence in vaccines?

How do you stay current on the latest ACIP recommendations? Do prescribers receive routine training to prepare for and focus on the vaccination discussion with parents on the current [ACIP Recommended Routine and Catch-Up Immunization Schedules](#)?

Strengthen Vaccination Communications

This strategy highlights the importance of promoting vaccination and helping providers increase positive messaging about vaccination to their patients. The strategy includes developing, reviewing, and disseminating the provider's patient vaccination policy. The strategy also includes other approaches to vaccination messaging, such as posting flyers and posters throughout the site and including vaccine-related content in emails, mailings, website content, and social media posts.

Questions to Consider

Does your practice have a vaccination policy for patients? How does staff share and promote your practice-wide vaccination policy with all new and existing patients (e.g., including new patient packets, displaying the policy in waiting areas and exam rooms)? How does your clinic promote the importance of on-time vaccination to new and existing patients?

What reliable information about vaccines do you provide to parents and patients? What materials do you share to promote vaccinations above and beyond the required vaccine information sheets (VIS)? What resources do you provide to parents and patients that explain vaccination or address common concerns about vaccines?

How do you communicate your support of vaccination outside your practice? Do you have a website or utilize social media platforms? How can you incorporate positive vaccine messaging into these platforms?

How does your staff respond if parents or patients express vaccine hesitancy? Would staff benefit from training on common myths and misconceptions and how to respond to them?

The Interconnectedness of IQIP Core Strategies

Though they emphasize different aspects of a provider's routine vaccination workflow, the best practices associated with the four core IQIP strategies often overlap. For example, a well-maintained IIS helps to inform a strong vaccine recommendation, and it also helps to ensure that subsequent visits are scheduled to complete each vaccine series on time. Similarly, when a practice has a clear vaccination policy that all patients are aware of, it makes it easier for providers to give a strong recommendation in the exam room and stress the importance of scheduling the next vaccination appointment before the patient leaves. When selecting and implementing these QI strategies, it is essential to consider how they intersect and depend upon staff engagement across the practice.