

# Increasing Access to Recommended Adult Vaccines in the Medical Practice Setting

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### Background

Routine adult immunization rates in the United States, even before the onset of the pandemic and COVID 19 vaccines, are markedly suboptimal.<sup>3</sup> With an estimated 40- 90,000 adults succumbing to vaccine preventable illnesses such as influenza and pneumonia in a typical year, improving the adult vaccine rate is critical to saving lives.<sup>5</sup>

Primary care practices who provide medical care for adult patients have substantial economic and management hurdles in providing vaccines to their patients.<sup>4</sup> As a result, all too often these adult care practices avoid carrying many of the vaccines recommended by the ACIP. Dr. Freed, et al in their 2010 article in *Vaccine*, found that “Of the respondents, 27% (31% FPs vs 20% IMs) stocked all adult vaccines.” The number of these recommended vaccines has also increased over recent years.<sup>1 2</sup> Pharmacies have offered some options but many patients, especially those with underlying medical conditions or vaccine hesitancy, often prefer to talk to their trusted medical professional in their medical home.

VaxCare is a technology driven platform that can provide all recommended adult vaccines in the offices of primary care practice partners (VaxCare.com). Vaccines are provided at no upfront cost with an automatic vaccine replenishment system to minimize/avoid stock outs of vaccines. Patients are typically able to get their vaccines at the time of their office visit, including Medicare Part D which is particularly cumbersome for offices. Insurance eligibility, billing of the vaccine and administration fee are handled by the VaxCare system. Where available, EHR and state immunization registry integration is also included, lowering the burden and manual labor on office staff.

### Report

We examined 429 adult practices who onboarded with VaxCare from 5/1/2019 to 6/1/2021. When practices join VaxCare we purchase their existing stock of private vaccine, and this capital is infused back into the practices. This gives us visibility into which vaccines are being stocked at the time of joining VaxCare. We then offer to stock any/all ACIP schedule vaccines that the practices request, regardless of manufacturer. 393 practices or 91.6% chose to increase the range of products that they carried in the office for immediate patient use.

## INCREASING ACCESS TO RECOMMENDED ADULT VACCINES

**TABLE 1 Vaccine Portfolio: Before and After VaxCare**

Specialty	Number of Customers	Increased Portfolio (#)	Increased Portfolio (%)	Avg. # Products Before VaxCare	Avg. # Products After VaxCare
Family Practice	143	130	91%	8	13
Internal Medicine	286	263	92%	6	10
<b>Total*</b>	429	393	92%	9	13

\*Reflects the range of products encountered in practices.

**TABLE 2 Practice-Stocked Vaccines: Before and After VaxCare**

Product	% Customers Offering the Product Before Joining VaxCare	% Customers Offering the Product After Joining VaxCare	VaxCare Effect
Zoster	21%	86%	64%
PCV13	42%	92%	50%
PPSV23	48%	95%	47%
HPV9	31%	65%	33%
Tdap	73%	99%	26%
Meningococcal ACWY	36%	61%	26%
Hep B	46%	70%	24%
Hep A	35%	58%	23%
MMR	35%	54%	19%
Varicella	29%	45%	16%
Meningococcal B	17%	32%	15%
IPV	17%	31%	13%
Rotavirus	15%	27%	12%
DTaP	23%	34%	10%
HIB	21%	30%	9%
DTaP + IPV + HIB	14%	21%	7%
MMRV	7%	14%	7%
IPV + DTaP	14%	21%	7%
TD	28%	34%	6%
DTaP + IPV + Hep B	10%	15%	5%
Hep A + Hep B	5%	9%	4%
Dt	0%	0%	0%

### Discussion

A large percentage (91.6%) of adult care practices choose to carry a wide variety of recommended immunizations for their patients once the numerous hurdles to doing so are overcome. VaxCare, through partnership with practices in our system, a) can improve access to adults for recommended vaccines, b) patient convenience of care when vaccines are received in the medical home and c) professional satisfaction for practices who are once again able to provide important preventive care for their patients.

Zoster vaccine showed the largest growth which may have been influenced by scarcity in 2019 and a portion of 2020. Pneumococcal vaccines are clearly important vaccine(s) for adult practices to carry and this is recognized by those offices in their decision to expand the offering to their patients. HPV9 vaccine, well recognized for its need to grow rates, may experience better uptake by placing this vaccine in the patient's medical home with trusted relationships and shared decision making.

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### References

- 1 2010 ACIP Adult Schedule, <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5901a5.htm>
- 2 2021 ACIP Adult Schedule, <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/adult/adult-combined-schedule.pdf>
- 3 Surveillance of Vaccination Coverage Among Adult Populations — United States, 2018 <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/ss/ss7003a1.htm>
- 4 Primary care physician perspectives on providing adult vaccines, GL Freed, et al, Vaccine2010, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0264410X10018840?via%3Dihub>
- 5 <https://www.healthypeople.gov/node/3527/data-details.%C2%A0Accessed#:~:text=Despite%20progress%2C%20approximately%2042%2C000%20adults,outbreaks%20of%20vaccine%2Dpreventable%20diseases.>

### Author Bios

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Dr. Filer serves as Chief Medical Officer for VaxCare, Orlando, FL. She is a Board-Certified Family Medicine physician. Dr. Filer previously served as President and Board Chair of the American Academy of Family Physicians and the first Physician General of Pennsylvania during the administration of Gov. Tom Ridge. Dr. Filer received her MD degree from Hahnemann University, Philadelphia, PA, and her MBA from Pennsylvania State University.

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