

VAXCARE WHITE PAPER

Boosting Flu Vaccinations in Parents & Children

How **VaxCare** Helped Pediatric Care Clinicians
Dramatically Increase Vaccination Rates



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Executive Summary

● THE CHALLENGE

Help our partners increase their flu vaccination rates of their patients while supporting understaffed offices and exhausted clinicians.

● THE PLAN

An outreach program to send automated text reminders to parents on behalf of their physicians to encourage the whole family to get their shots at the same time as their children.

● THE RESULTS

A significant rise in parent vaccinations —16% higher— in offices that enrolled in our program vs. those that did not. The increase among children was even higher: **enrolled offices vaccinated 315% more children against flu than those that were not enrolled.**

The Challenge: Raising Rates in an Especially Difficult Flu Season

Pandemic lockdowns helped slow the spread of COVID-19, but they also kept patients out of their physicians' offices for most routine care, including recommended vaccinations. This resulted in lowered immunization rates across all recommended vaccinations, including flu.

Health organizations and the medical community raised the alarm—this many unprotected and under-protected patients presented a serious risk to community health, including the possibility of deadly measles, whooping cough, or meningococcal outbreaks. But there was little doctors and their staff could do. **Most offices were painfully understaffed, and those clinicians who remained were exhausted,** lacking the time or resources for outreach.

We at VaxCare wanted to help. But we knew we'd need to find a creative and proactive way to help get patients into offices and vaccination rates up.

The Plan: Direct Outreach to Parents & Caregivers

Parents often make the appointment to get their children protected, but don't do the same for themselves. **Our Mobile Hub's quick and easy "Add a Patient" capability meant parents could get their flu shots at the same time as their child** (with the bonus of no additional paperwork for the staff). So we built a program to text parents to let them know that they—and their entire family—could get their flu shot when their child got theirs. By letting parents know just how convenient we make it for them to get their shot we hoped to drive rates among adults as well as children.

Given the high level of trust parents place in their children's doctors, and not wanting to add extra work to already busy offices, VaxCare sent the text messages on behalf of the practice.

"Parents know and trust us as their child's healthcare provider, so having us be the ones reaching out makes a big difference in getting them into our office," says Amanda Ferrar, office manager for Baldwin Pediatrics in Panama City, FL, a partner who signed up for the program.

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Office Manager, Baldwin Pediatrics
Panama City, Florida

The Program: “Parents Welcome”

We kicked the program off in early August 2021, inviting our pediatric and family medicine partners to enroll. **This direct outreach program was offered at no charge and was managed entirely by VaxCare, with no work required by physicians or their staff.**

Despite a brief enrollment window, a large number of pediatric and family medicine offices signed up*. We shipped each office custom-designed posters and stickers to promote flu shots, as well as additional flu vaccine inventory to make sure they had plenty on hand for the influx of patients.

A general text message (right) was sent to parents on behalf of their child’s doctor, letting them know that they could get their flu shot when their children received theirs. After an appointment was scheduled, reminders were sent 72 and 24 hours prior.

We soon began hearing from our partner practices that **the program was taking a huge weight off their shoulders: Parents were calling in to schedule flu shots, rather than staff having to take time out of their already busy day to call them.**

Once parents started arriving at the practices with their children in tow, staff members were able to use VaxCare’s Mobile Hub to quickly capture patient information and give the shot. The Mobile Hub also provided another bonus that helped increase rates.

“Because the Mobile Hub can go anywhere, we were able to run drive-through flu vaccine clinics for kids and their parents,” says Dr. Lourdes Ceron, founder of Ceron Pediatrics & Integrated Medicine in Jacksonville, Fla. **“Our clinics were so popular because they saved parents time and it kept them from having to come into the office during the Omicron surge.”**

* Parents Welcome ran across 27 states. A total of 75 partners that enrolled, representing 81 office locations.



VaxCare sent text message reminders directly to patients (top), and provided practices with promotional collateral to reinforce the message (bottom).

BOOSTING FLU VACCINATIONS IN PARENTS & CHILDREN

Vickery Pediatrics in Cumming, GA also had great success with the program.

“The parents loved it,” says Kim Murdock, office manager for Vickery. **“It was so easy with VaxCare’s Mobile Hub to scan their driver’s license and insurance card. The added bonus was that our text outreach to parents reminded them that their kids needed their flu shots too.”**

The Results

Our data shows that between August and December 2021, **offices that participated in Parents Welcome vaccinated 16% more parents against flu** than those that did not participate (all offices were pediatric and family medicine).

While we suspected there would be an accompanying increase in children’s vaccinations from the parent-focused communications, the results among pediatric patients were even more pronounced: **Enrolled partners vaccinated 315% more children against flu compared with partners that did not enroll.** These numbers represent an important positive impact not only for VaxCare partners, but also on overall community vaccination rates.



More “Parents Welcome” promotional collateral from VaxCare.

16%

Percent Rise in Parent
Vaccinations with VaxCare

315%

Percent Increase in Children
Vaccinated Against Flu with VaxCare

The Conclusion

VaxCare’s vision is “Every patient, fully vaccinated,” and our 2021 Parents Welcome program put that vision into action. **Parents Welcome showed how partnership and technology can work to drive up flu vaccination rates for one of the most under-vaccinated age groups (adults), as well as some of the most vulnerable (children),** while relieving staff of the extra work of patient outreach. We are excited to build on this success as we work to support our partners in delivering the “triple aim” of better care, lower costs, and improved patient outcomes. +