

Maximizing Use of Your Immunization Information System

Tip Sheet for Increasing Registry Support of Your Immunization Program

One of the best ways to ensure your immunization information system (IIS, otherwise known as immunization registry) contributes to your immunization program goals and the *2010 Healthy People Objective* is to make broad use of registry data within your program. Such uses not only improve data quality but also enhance the value of your registry to others, including your own immunization program staff.

Since the investment in an IIS can be substantial, it only makes sense to maximize the return on that investment by ensuring other immunization program staff are fully using the system to support their work.

Here are examples of how immunization program staff have come to rely on registry data as part of their ongoing activities:

- Use IIS data to identify common practice issues (for example, certain doses of a vaccine group routinely not meeting minimum interval and/or age requirements), highlighting those issues in professional education activities.
- Improving VFC vaccine management and accountability through inventory modules, registry alerts on lots running low or due to expire, and automated ordering through the registry.
- Having peri-natal hepatitis B staff use to registry to monitor series completion in infants born to surface antigen-positive moms.
- Relying on registry data for VPD disease investigations rather than expensive chart pulls. This also helps protect the confidentiality of patient data by limiting what the investigators see to immunization data in the registry.
- Using the data to identify geographic pockets of under-immunization, or under-immunized populations, such as children enrolled in WIC.
- Generating coverage level reports by jurisdiction or provider practice.
- Reporting coverage by antigen and dose, to identify which vaccine doses are most responsible for not achieving UTD status at 24 months.
- Monitoring trends in birth dose of HBV.
- Monitoring resumption of vaccines after shortages.
- Generating recall notices after vaccine shortages.
- Communication (web links, posted announcements) on shortages, trainings, etc.
- Using IIS data to export to CASA or otherwise assess coverage levels for AFIX visits.
- Generating school compliance reports.
- Comparing the IIS and VFC provider databases in order to keep both updated with changes in clinic names and addresses.

“Learning how our registry meets the PROW standards makes it clear that SDIR is more than just a database.”

San Diego Immunization
Registry staff member

The first systematic way to support increased use of registry was a collaborative project of the Association of Immunization Managers, the American Immunization Registry Association, and the CDC National Immunization Program, known as the *PROW Standards of Excellence*. Over 20 sites used these standards to identify and prioritize concrete ways in which their IIS could better support other immunization program activities such as VFC, AFIX, surveillance, assessment, and provider quality assurance. These sites reviewed PROW's three-tiered grouping of standards—from relatively easy to resource intensive to implement—identifying which they already met and which would be priorities for the future.

Other projects adopted the basic principle behind PROW to explore new uses of registry data and new interactions among immunization staff, without going through a methodical review and scoring of comprehensive standards.

Regardless of the approach, programs are identifying similar ways to rely more and more on registry data. *And increased use of registry data invariably improves data quality.*

Here are suggestions for getting started:

- Get the PROW Standards and worksheets from the AIRA website (http://www.immregistries.org/about/GET_PROW.phtml). Regardless of whether or not you use the PROW document, it provides good examples of enhanced use of registry data.
- Identify a champion who can coordinate the process and engage others.
- Contact one or more of the PROW Centers of Excellence for ideas on how they reviewed the PROW standards.
- Review the various approaches used by others. Select or create a process that works for you.
- Involve the immunization staff as end users. Get *their* ideas for how they could better use registry data.
- Manage expectations. Make sure immunization staff know it can take time to add new enhancements and reports.
- Focus on implementing new ways to use data that don't require expensive enhancements.
- Ask each program area to write one or more activities in the 317 application that relates to use of the registry.

For more information on PROW and on ways to maximize use of IIS data, please see (http://www.immregistries.org/about/GET_PROW.phtml).