



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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February 26, 2015

Dear Healthcare Providers:

Help us keep adults healthy. Vaccination is an important step toward accomplishing this. Every year, thousands of adults in the United States suffer serious health problems, are hospitalized, and even die from diseases that could have been prevented by vaccination.

You are the most trusted source of health information to your patients. Your recommendation is a crucial factor in whether your patients get vaccinated or not. Most adults aren't aware that they need vaccines throughout their lives to protect against serious diseases like influenza, pneumococcal disease, pertussis (whooping cough), and shingles. Help your patients make educated, informed choices about immunizations. Their health and the health of their families and communities depend on it.

I urge you to create and maintain a culture of prevention and safety in your practice. The Standards for Adult Immunizations Practice published by the National Vaccine Advisory Committee contain strategies that will help achieve this goal. Implement them to improve awareness and raise vaccination rates in your practice.

1. **Assess immunization status of all your patients at every clinical encounter.** Many missed opportunities for vaccination happen because health care professionals are not routinely assessing vaccination status.
2. **Strongly recommend vaccines that patients need.** Address patient questions and concerns. Talk to your patients about the benefits and potential risks of vaccination. Highlight positive experiences with vaccination and explain potential costs of getting sick.
3. **Administer** needed vaccines or **refer** your patients to a vaccination provider in the area who offers vaccines you don't stock.
4. **Document** vaccines received by your patients in the Washington State Immunization Information System (WAIIS). If you are referring patients to other vaccination providers, make sure to confirm that your patients received the recommended vaccines you asked them to get.

If you are not currently participating in the WAIIS, it's easy to get started. This system helps your office know which vaccines your patients have had and provides a forecast of which vaccines they need and when. Information is available online ([www.waiis.wa.gov/](http://www.waiis.wa.gov/)) or by phone 1-800-325-5599.

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Thank you for your continued effort to protect adults, especially those who are vulnerable, from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathy Lofy".

Kathy Lofy, MD  
State Health Officer  
Washington State Department of Health

Enclosure: Adult Immunization Resources for Health Care Providers

## Adult Immunization Resources for Health Care Providers

Here are some resources to help you create a culture of prevention and safety in your practice:

### Washington State Department of Health

- Immunization: [www.doh.wa.gov/Immunization](http://www.doh.wa.gov/Immunization)
- Adult immunization resources:  
[www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/Immunization/Adult/Resources](http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/Immunization/Adult/Resources)
- Flu News: [www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/Flu.aspx](http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/Flu.aspx)
- Measles in Washington: [www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/Measles](http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/Measles)
- Pertussis in Washington:  
[www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/WhoopingCough](http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/WhoopingCough)

### Immunization Action Coalition of Washington (IACW)

- [www.immunizewa.org/](http://www.immunizewa.org/)
- Health care workers toolkit:  
[www.withinreachwa.org/what-we-do/healthy-communities/immunizations/for-providers/health-care-workers-toolkit/](http://www.withinreachwa.org/what-we-do/healthy-communities/immunizations/for-providers/health-care-workers-toolkit/)

### Immunization Action Coalition (IAC)

- [www.immunize.org/](http://www.immunize.org/)  
IAC provides comprehensive immunization information and resources for health care professionals, the public, and coalitions.

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- Visit [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/adults/for-practice/standards/](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/adults/for-practice/standards/) to learn about the revised Standards for Adult Immunization Practice.
- Visit [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/adult.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/adult.html) to get the latest adult immunization schedule as well as adult immunization updates and recommendations.
- Visit [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/adults/for-practice/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/adults/for-practice/index.html) to get the latest adult immunization resources.
- Visit [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/adults/for-patients/health-conditions.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/patient-ed/adults/for-patients/health-conditions.html) to get adult immunization resources for patients with chronic health conditions.

### National Adult and Influenza Immunization Summit (NAIIS)

- Visit [www.izsummitpartners.org/adult-immunization-standards/](http://www.izsummitpartners.org/adult-immunization-standards/) to get more information about standards for adult immunization practice as well as other adult immunization resources.

### Vaccine Facts and Policy Project (VFAP)

- [www.vaccinefactsandpolicy.org](http://www.vaccinefactsandpolicy.org)  
This web site has a comprehensive database of U.S. immunization information. VFAP is a partnership of the Association of Immunization Managers (AIM), the Milken Institute of Public Health of the George Washington University (GW), and the Immunization Action Coalition (IAC).

American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)

- [www.aafp.org](http://www.aafp.org)  
Search for adult immunization information and practice management; wide variety of information.

American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)

- [www.acog.org](http://www.acog.org)  
They have immunization toolkits available for HPV, Tdap, and flu as well as other resources.

American Osteopathic Association (AOA)

- [www.osteopathic.org](http://www.osteopathic.org)  
Their Clinical Assessment Program (CAP) assists physicians in evaluating their immunization practice and vaccination rates (three modules and CME credits).