

New Immunize.org webinar

Immunize.org's new webinar, "Improving the Vaccination Experience: Accessible Vaccination for Neurodiverse People at Any Age," now available for on-demand viewing.

On Dec. 13, 2022, Immunize.org and experts from the Autism Society hosted and recorded a one-hour webinar, [Improving the Vaccination Experience: Accessible Vaccination for Neurodiverse People at Any Age](https://www.immunize.org/webinars/cdc4/) (<https://www.immunize.org/webinars/cdc4/>). In this webinar, participants learned more about the Autism Society's practical tips to improve vaccine confidence by employing strategies to reduce stress when vaccinating neurodiverse patients.

People with autism and other developmental disabilities have lower childhood vaccination rates than their peers without autism, leaving them vulnerable to many vaccine-preventable diseases. Vaccination visits can be especially stressful for these families. Effective strategies exist to reduce pain and anxiety during the vaccination visit.

Influenza vaccine prebook for the 2023-2024 season

Influenza vaccine prebook for the 2023-24 season for the MnVFC and UUAV programs opened on Jan. 19. Prebook requests are due Feb. 2. Requests submitted after Feb. 2 will be considered late and will be prioritized accordingly. MnVFC and UUAV influenza prebook requests must be submitted in MIIC as in years past. If you have questions, please contact the MnVFC program at health.mdhvaccine@state.mn.us.

Changes to Medicare reimbursements for vaccines

As of Jan. 1, of this year, Medicare Part D eliminated out-of-pocket costs for beneficiaries who receive vaccines recommended for adults by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP).

This change to Medicare Part D removes financial barriers to vaccination for millions of people age 65 years and older. For the first time, people with Medicare's prescription drug coverage will pay no deductible and will not be responsible for any cost-sharing for ACIP-recommended vaccines, including shingles vaccine, Tdap, and travel vaccines.

Medicare Part D plans cover all vaccines that are commercially available, ACIP recommended, and not covered by Medicare Part B. Medicare Part B vaccines (including influenza and pneumococcal vaccines) have been given to adult beneficiaries without cost-sharing for many years.

Share the news with your patients, colleagues, and friends, and encourage those with Medicare Part D to get the vaccines they need today.

Increase recognition of pertussis

Testing for pertussis is lacking and likely leading to the underdiagnosis of patients with fits of coughing. Consider pertussis in patients with coughs lasting longer than 7 days, especially coughs that are not resolving. Remember that post-tussive vomiting and paroxysmal cough symptoms are specific to pertussis, but sometimes symptoms can be limited to just a prolonged

cough. Pertussis cases are seen in all ages and amongst the fully vaccinated (less severe symptoms). All cases of pertussis must be reported to MDH, including clinically diagnosed cases without positive test results. For more information on pertussis, treatment, testing and current data visit [Pertussis Information for Health Professionals](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/pertussis/hcp) (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/pertussis/hcp).

MIIC client screen updates

Users who can edit clients in MIIC may have noticed an update to the client screen in MIIC. The city, state, and zip code fields were moved to below the PO box field in the client address section and the county dropdown was moved from the personal information section to the address section, below the state and zip code fields. We continue to work on improving the accessibility and usability of this page.

MIIC user survey

MIIC is excited to send out their annual MIIC User Survey in Feb. 2023. The survey will be emailed to MIIC users and will cover many of MIIC's features and programs. Please consider filling out the survey as responses will be used to inform enhancements to MIIC as well as improve our user guidance and training program. Please let us know if you have any questions by emailing the MIIC Help Desk at health.miichelp@state.mn.us.

Department of Human Services (DHS) postcard

MDH is partnering with DHS to send out a COVID-19 reminder postcard at the end of January. The postcard will be sent to 5- to 11-year-olds who are enrolled in a Minnesota Health Care Program (MHCP) and are recommended or overdue for a dose of COVID-19 vaccine. Questions about the postcard can be sent to the MIIC Help Desk at health.miichelp@state.mn.us.

Central Minnesota Immunization Connection (CMIC) closure

As of Jan. 1, 2023, the CMIC based out of Stearns County has closed. For MIIC users in counties from this region (Stearns, Wright, Sherburne, Benton, Pine, Isanti, Mille Lacs, Chisago, and Kanabec), all requests for MIIC support, outreach, user guidance, and training should go to the MDH MIIC Help Desk at health.miichelp@state.mn.us.