

Tips for Implementing Mobile Clinics to Vaccinate Children Against COVID-19 at Community-Based Locations



When implementing mobile vaccination clinics (mobile clinics) and expanding clinics to new locations, jurisdictions should consider the unique contexts of their communities to provide the best possible care.



Partner with community organizations to improve trust

- Partner with community organizations to serve as champions and trusted messengers when bringing mobile clinics to new locations, especially when considering historically marginalized communities or communities that might be unfamiliar with the mobile clinic operator.
- Hire community members to serve as community health workers, raising awareness of the clinic and building trust with patients.



Understand and address language barriers of the particular community

- Hire staff or interpreters who speak the languages and local dialects of the community or ask partner organizations if they can provide interpreters for the clinic.
- Develop and provide translations of specific medical terminology for interpreters to use, such as side effects, common concerns, and information on the vaccine-preventable disease.



Account for unique weather conditions or terrain when planning and securing supplies

- When operating in hot weather, consider operating clinics during the evening, using funds or donations from partners to provide water for patients and staff, and having enough staff to ensure there are breaks to avoid overheating.
- Set up tents outside the clinic for protection from sun and precipitation. Tents can also help provide privacy for patients.
- In areas that are geographically difficult to reach, work with emergency managers and local jurisdictions to navigate logistical challenges to providing services.



Be prepared for adverse vaccine events

- Ensure mobile clinic staff are trained in emergency medical response and know where the nearest emergency department is located.
- Supply the mobile clinic with medical emergency supplies, such as a blood pressure monitor, epinephrine, and an H1 antihistamine.



Connect patients to medical homes for follow-up and essential health care services

- For vaccines that require multiple doses, ensure that patients without a medical home know where and when they can receive their follow-up doses, whether through the mobile clinic or other local providers.
- Collect information on local safety net or Medicaid providers and share the providers' information with families verbally, with QR codes, or via printed handouts.



Understand the policy, environmental, and funding context

- Understand policies related to which providers can vaccinate children to inform staffing plans.
- Consider how policies on minor consent affect clinic processes and protocols to obtain consent from parents and/or minors.
- Consider whether any local groups would hinder implementation of your program.
- Consider notifying local law enforcement of your clinic in the case of threats or individuals who attempt to disrupt operations.
- Ensure local ordinances around permitting are followed.
- Develop and implement processes for verifying insurance information to accurately bill for vaccinations.
- Understand expenses will vary widely based on jurisdiction specifics and use of existing staff, infrastructure, funding support, and partnerships.
- Mitigate costs by partnering with organizations that already have infrastructure to operate mobile clinics.

During the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE), government funding was available that offered a large number of allowances and flexibilities for spending, including spending on the leasing, rental, and purchase of vans. In the post-PHE environment, jurisdictions will have less of this type of government funding and will likely need to find new ways to fund practice implementation. For example, government funding is now available for the leasing of vans, but not purchase.



Understand the demand for COVID-19 vaccines in the community

- Work with community partners to publicize mobile clinic events through flyers, social media, and other dissemination channels that are popular within the community.
- Ask patients to register for appointments online ahead of the clinic to get a sense of how many people will attend.
- Use information on demand and appointment registration to right-size the supplies needed.

About Association of Immunization Managers:

The Association of Immunization Managers (AIM) is a nonprofit membership association comprised of the directors of the 64 federally funded state, territorial, and local public health immunization programs. AIM is dedicated to working with its partners nationwide to reduce, eliminate, or eradicate vaccine-preventable diseases. AIM also works to ensure the success of its members by providing support in their programming interests. Since 1999, AIM has enabled collaboration among immunization managers to effectively control vaccine-preventable diseases and improve immunization coverage in the United States. For more information on AIM, please visit www.immunizationmanagers.org/.

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