



Direct Relief

INNOVATION AWARDS IN COMMUNITY HEALTH:

ADDRESSING INFECTIOUS DISEASE IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

PREPARED BY

CHRT





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FOR: DIRECT RELIEF

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FROM 2023-2025

Direct Relief and the Pfizer Foundation partnered to support programs strengthening infectious disease care in underserved and high-risk U.S. communities. Through the *Innovation Awards in Community Health*, nineteen safety-net providers in 11 states received funding to deliver innovative prevention and treatment strategies focused on vaccine education, outreach, and delivery. The awardees included 14 federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) and 5 free & charitable clinics. Their programs served older adults, children, immunocompromised individuals, people experiencing homelessness, farmworkers, and other underserved groups.

The grant program reached over 700,000 people and delivered more than 141,000 vaccinations. Programs targeted vaccine-preventable diseases such as COVID-19, influenza (flu), hepatitis A and B, and human papillomavirus (HPV), while also addressing vaccine hesitancy and misinformation. In addition to vaccination, many programs provided screening, testing, treatment, and broader health education, ensuring a comprehensive approach to infectious disease care.

Innovative strategies included using mobile units, electronic health record (EHR) features, telehealth, peer vaccine ambassadors, social media campaigns, community events, workshops, and culturally tailored educational materials. Foundational to the success of these programs was a strong focus on building trust with patients and close collaboration with community partners. As a result of this work, awardees improved vaccination rates, reduced disease, expanded preventive care, and strengthened long-term community capacity.

OVER THE TWO YEARS OF PROGRAMMING, THE 19 PARTICIPATING AWARDEES:

HEALTHCARE DELIVERY

- » Reached 257,474 people directly through healthcare services.
- » Administered 69,984 maternal, newborn, and child vaccinations.
- » Delivered 83,358 adult vaccinations.

OUTREACH

- » Reached 522,199 people through outreach and media campaigns.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- » Trained 660 health workers, including community health workers and clinical staff.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- » Strengthened 100 healthcare facilities. Improvements included equipment and technology upgrades and quality system enhancements.

ABOUT THE AWARDEES:

Alabama

- » **Rural Health Medical Program, Selma, AL | FQHC** – Addresses influenza, pneumococcal disease, hepatitis A/B, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and tuberculosis across six rural counties through outreach, mobile clinics, health navigators, and culturally tailored messaging.

California

- » **SAC Health, San Bernardino, CA | FQHC** – Uses data-driven strategies to increase child and adolescent immunizations through their Strategic Approach to Vaccination Excellence (SAVE) program.
- » **Symba Center, Victorville, CA | Free & Charitable Clinic** – Provides relationship-based outreach, education, and vaccination services to unhoused individuals in San Bernardino County.

District of Columbia

- » **Community of Hope, Washington, DC | FQHC** – Provides targeted outreach and education to patients who are behind on key vaccines.



Florida

- » **Empower U Community Health Center, Miami, FL | FQHC** – Offers expanded vaccination and testing for hepatitis A/B, influenza, and COVID-19 through clinic services and a fully equipped mobile medical unit offering immediate treatment.
- » **Miami Beach Community Health Center, Miami, FL | FQHC** – Uses motivational interviewing, education, outreach clinics, and supportive services to increase vaccine confidence and improve influenza and COVID-19 vaccination rates.

Illinois

- » **AHS Family Health Center, Chicago, IL | FQHC** – Addresses health disparities through targeted immunization efforts, outreach, and education surrounding COVID-19 testing/immunizations, hepatitis B, influenza, and other immunizations.
- » **Family Christian Health Center, Harvey, IL | FQHC** – Expands vaccine education and access for primarily African American and Hispanic communities through pop-up vaccination events, walk-in clinics, and outreach campaigns.

Maryland

- » **Shepherd's Clinic, Baltimore, MD | Free & Charitable Clinic** – Implements *IGNITE! Fire Up Your Immunity*, combining interactive remote education, multilingual materials, community events, and clinic-based education with a waiting-room video series.

Massachusetts + Connecticut

- » **Connecticut River Valley Farmworker Health Program, Boston, MA | FQHC** – Provides community-driven outreach to farmworkers through its Sowing Seeds of Good Health program, overcoming geographic and financial barriers to preventive care and expanding access and engagement through health education, mobile health services, and community health worker support.

Michigan

- » **C-ASSIST Family Health Clinic, Garden City, MI | Free & Charitable Clinic** – Reduces vaccine disparities by training community vaccine ambassadors and running culturally sensitive media campaigns across TV, radio, print, social media, and community events.
- » **Street Outreach Teams, Detroit, MI | Free & Charitable Clinic** – Expands mobile medical care for individuals who are unhoused or at risk of trafficking, offering vaccines (hepatitis A and B, HPV, tetanus, influenza), STI treatment, harm reduction, and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP).

Mississippi

- » **Delta Health Center, Mound Bayou, MS | FQHC** – Expands its vaccination program across all routine vaccines using community outreach, trusted messengers, and digital tools (MAVEN Project, CareMessage) to combat misinformation and reach underserved populations.
- » **Mallory Community Health Center, Lexington, MS | FQHC** – Implements a communication-centered strategy to build vaccine confidence through social media, telehealth engagement, and transparent messaging to support under-resourced rural communities.

New York

- » **Care For the Homeless, New York, NY | FQHC** – Delivers culturally appropriate vaccine outreach across all five boroughs in shelters, safe havens, drop-in centers, soup kitchens, and street locations through their Vaccine Equal Access Project (VEAP) initiative.
- » **Community Healthcare Network, New York, NY | FQHC** – Supports patients living with HIV using a tailored EHR dashboard, targeted outreach, culturally sensitive education, and clinical indicators to ensure vaccine completion.
- » **Housing Works, Brooklyn, NY | FQHC** – Uses peer vaccine messengers for outreach, navigation, and social media engagement in East New York, Harlem, Lower East Side, and the South Bronx to promote vaccines for COVID-19, influenza, orthopox, HPV, and hepatitis A/B.
- » **Urban Health Plan, Bronx, NY | FQHC** – Expands access to vaccine education, screening, testing, and administration to reduce disease risks and healthcare costs while protecting vulnerable populations through their *ACTIVATE, VACCINATE* program.

Rhode Island

- » **Clinica Esperanza / Hope Clinic, Providence, RI | Free & Charitable Clinic** – Increases vaccine confidence in Spanish-speaking, uninsured communities through peer education, community health workers (Navegantes), and patient-centered vaccine support as part of their *Oportuna Vacuna* program.



WHAT WAS LEARNED:

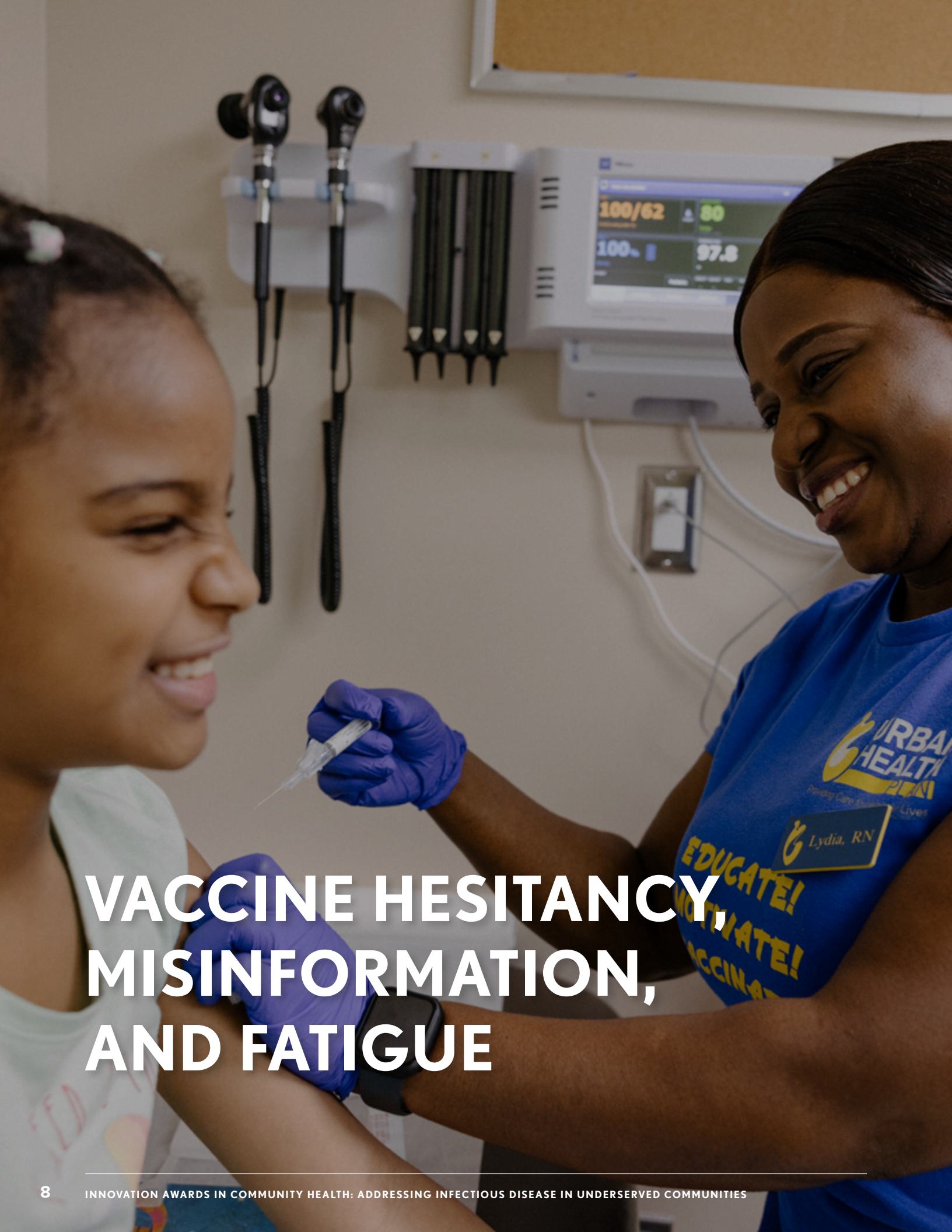
This report discusses what the 19 awardees learned while implementing the *Innovation Awards in Community Health: Addressing Infectious Disease in Underserved Communities* programs and initiatives. The report is intended as a valuable resource for federally qualified health centers, free & charitable clinics, community-based organizations, and other safety-net providers looking to expand their capacity to prevent, detect, and manage infectious diseases. The report is also intended to inform funders and policymakers who are eager to understand how to support and scale this important work.

At the end of the two-year funding period, Direct Relief, in partnership with the Pfizer Foundation, convened representatives from the 18 of the 19 awardees to discuss their programs and accomplishments. This convening also provided space for awardees to reflect on the challenges they faced and the lessons they learned throughout the implementation process.

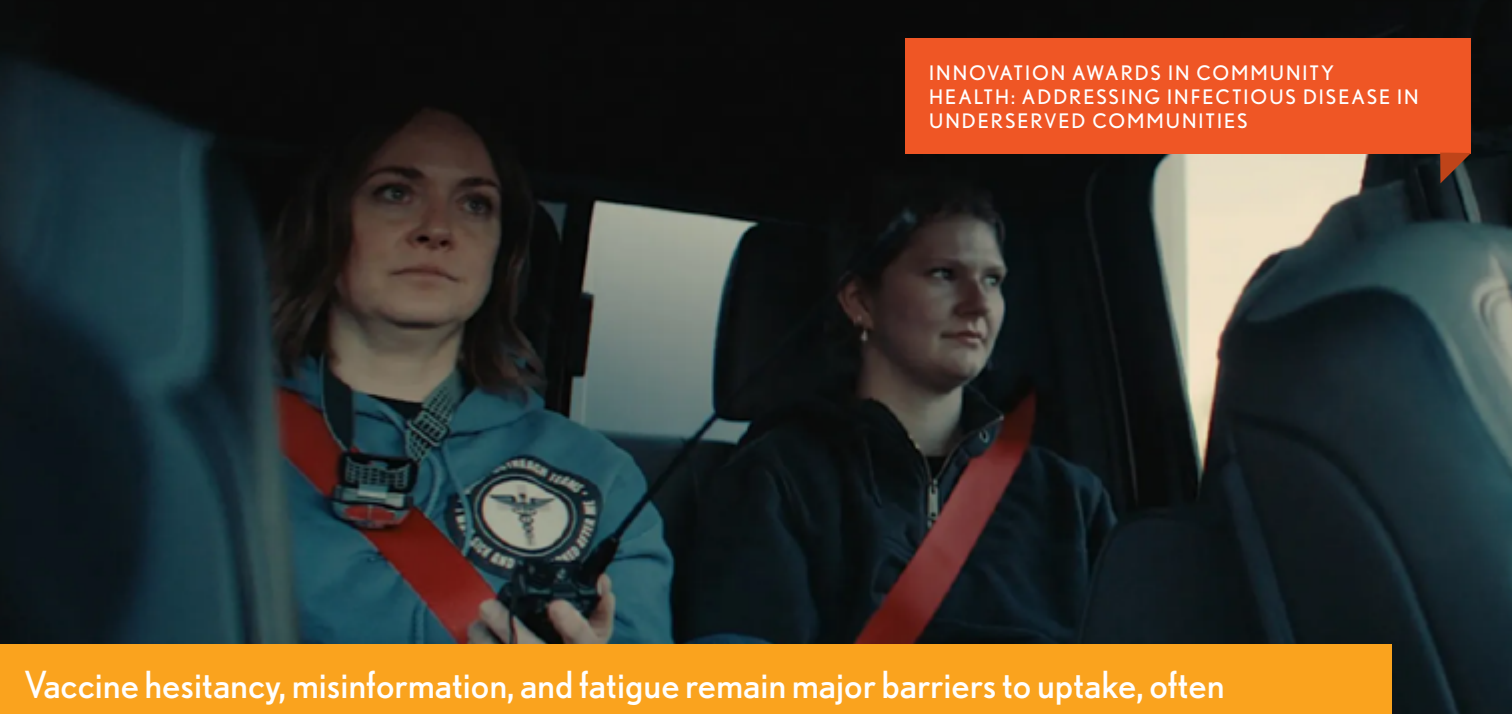
Several overarching themes emerged from these discussions, highlighting approaches that proved critical to program success:

- » Addressing vaccine hesitancy, misinformation, and fatigue
- » Supporting and sustaining the infectious disease workforce
- » Building and maintaining strong relationships and partnerships
- » Reducing barriers to care
- » Conducting effective and culturally responsive patient outreach
- » Using data-driven strategies to guide decision-making
- » Managing vaccine and infectious disease treatment supplies

The following sections provide a detailed overview of the lessons learned by the 19 awardees as they implemented these strategies within their communities.



VACCINE HESITANCY, MISINFORMATION, AND FATIGUE



Vaccine hesitancy, misinformation, and fatigue remain major barriers to uptake, often stemming from historical injustices and exacerbated by pandemic-related misinformation.

Some strategies that grantees have found effective for responding to vaccine hesitancy, mistrust, and fatigue include:

- » **Identify the root causes of hesitancy.** Conduct surveys, focus groups, or interviews with patients to uncover what misinformation, concerns, beliefs, or barriers are driving vaccine hesitancy among patient populations the organization serves. Tailor educational materials and outreach strategies based on these insights.
- » **Leverage trusted messengers.** Use community health workers, peer vaccine ambassadors, healthcare providers, and local leaders who share language, culture, or lived experiences with patients and can address local concerns and share credible information in culturally relevant ways.
- » **Train providers and staff in effective communication.** Equip staff with skills in motivational interviewing, perceptive communication, and culturally responsive engagement to better understand patient mistrust and respond empathetically.
- » **Use individualized outreach and rapport building,** as targeted, individualized outreach is often the most effective approach to reach and engage individuals who are experiencing vaccine hesitancy or mistrust. Leverage data on who is overdue for or refused vaccines to identify which patients would most benefit from individualized outreach.
- » **Build rapport by addressing broader health or social needs.** Once that rapport is established, patients are more open to engaging in conversations about vaccines.

“

People don't trust nor respect you when they are hungry, tired, cold (literally freezing) and you want to give them a vaccine. Yeah, not their priority. But when we can give food, a blanket, sleeping bag, kind words, hope and then we offer to treat a wound, give a flu shot, treat someone who was just raped, they seem to want to receive care after good rapport [is] developed.”

– Street Outreach Teams

- » **Be consistent.** Be a visible, consistent presence within your community to build trust with patients and make it more likely that they will be open to messaging about vaccines. If possible, assign consistent providers and community health workers so patients see the same faces and build rapport.
- » **Meet clients where they are at in terms of the information they are willing to share.** Consider not requiring patients to provide information that they are uncomfortable with to alleviate their concerns about sharing personal information and to encourage trust.
- » **Couple education with vaccination opportunities.** Provide education and vaccination at the same encounter to prevent motivation from fading.
- » **Use positive, empowering messaging.**
- » **Acknowledge patient concerns.** Avoid discounting or belittling patients' concerns. Take the time to listen to patients and then be prepared to address their concerns with credible, science-based explanations and resources.
- » **Address conflicting guidelines and policies.** Stay current with changing recommendations, prepare consistent messaging, and explain updates to reduce patient confusion and mistrust.
- » **Connect with peer organizations** to learn about strategies for tackling vaccine hesitancy, misinformation, and evolving policies and guidelines. Consider bringing partners together for regular meetings to discuss barriers, successes, and lessons learned, as well as connecting with organizations such as the The National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC), the National Association of Free Clinics (NAFC), and the Public Health Communications Collaborative.

“If we start off by going on a negative tangent and just sticking to misinformation, that’s not what we want the community to leave with. We want them to feel uplifted and feel supported and get factual information so that they can make better decisions.” — Housing Works

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:



MIAMI BEACH
COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTER

MIAMI BEACH COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER – MIAMI, FL

Miami Beach Community Health Center (MBCHC), a federally qualified health center serving Miami-Dade County, has implemented a variety of strategies to increase confidence in and uptake of influenza and COVID-19 vaccines. Since the beginning of the grant, MBCHC has observed an increase in vaccine hesitancy, mistrust, and fatigue, particularly for COVID-19 and the flu. Changing vaccine guidelines at the federal and state levels have increased patient confusion and hesitancy. To help navigate these challenges, MBCHC has connected with a variety of partners and peer organizations, including the University of Miami, the Health Choice Network, and Hispanic Alliance.

These connections have helped MBCHC better understand the root causes of vaccine hesitancy and identify best practices for vaccine messaging and outreach for their patient population.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

STREET OUTREACH TEAMS – DETROIT, MI

Street Outreach Teams is a free & charitable clinic in Detroit, Michigan that provides comprehensive medical care to rough sleepers, or those who are experiencing chronic homelessness and living out on the streets. This population is particularly vulnerable to infectious disease due to co-occurring risks such as chronic homelessness, untreated mental health and substance use disorders, sex work, and human trafficking. This population also has high levels of hesitancy and mistrust in vaccines and the healthcare system more broadly due to their history of marginalization.

Street Outreach Teams has found that taking the time to build trust with rough sleepers is critical to being able to provide infectious disease care.

Key strategies that Street Outreach Teams uses to build this rapport include bringing care to patients where they are in the community, showing up consistently, providing resources to help patients meet other basic needs (i.e., food, blankets), and partnering closely with other organizations who serve this population (i.e. human trafficking organizations, syringe service programs).



WATCH THE STREET OUTREACH TEAMS STORY



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

URBAN HEALTH PLAN – BRONX, NY

Urban Health Plan, a federally qualified health center serving Bronx, New York, established the ACTIVATE, VACCINATE program to provide vaccine education and improve access to infectious disease screenings, testing, and treatment. To guide their outreach strategy, Urban Health Plan surveyed over 400 patients and guardians to better understand their vaccine attitudes and concerns. One of the most notable survey findings was that 29% of respondents believed a child could get the flu from the flu vaccine, and an additional 31% were unsure. Urban Health Plan utilized these findings to inform their approach to vaccine education and messaging.

This strategy contributed to improved childhood vaccination rates, including a 4% increase in influenza vaccination rates.



SUPPORTING YOUR INFECTIOUS DISEASE WORKFORCE



A strong, well-supported infectious disease workforce is essential to improving vaccine confidence and uptake across communities.

From front-line providers to community health workers, every team member plays a vital role in addressing misinformation, building trust, and promoting infectious disease prevention and care. By investing in staff education, targeted provider support, and workforce stability, organizations can create a confident, informed, and resilient team that drives sustainable impact.

Building Confidence in Vaccine Communication

Your providers, community health workers, and other staff play a crucial role in both identifying and addressing vaccine hesitancy and misinformation. Staff education and engagement are key to building confidence in vaccine recommendations and improving vaccine uptake among patients.

STRATEGIES:

- » **Give staff the training and tools to address vaccine hesitancy.** To help prepare staff to effectively respond to patients concerns and questions about vaccines, train staff on topics such as:
 - The importance of vaccines
 - Vaccine information (i.e., how vaccines work, vaccine side effects, vaccine schedules)
 - Motivational interviewing
 - Perceptive communication
 - Tailoring communication for various patient populations
 - Serving as intermediaries between patients and healthcare providers
- » **Provide regular staff training.** Hold regular, mandatory meetings to update staff on vaccine guidelines, disease outbreaks, and communication

strategies. To encourage engagement and enthusiasm at these meetings provide food and other incentives, share key metrics on vaccination trends and gaps, and integrate games and competitions.

- » **Give continuous feedback and judgment-free learning.** Providers, community health workers, and staff may share the same vaccine concerns and hesitations as the populations they serve – especially when they come from the same communities and cultures. Survey staff to better understand their knowledge gaps and concerns, use teach-back methods, and create a judgment-free environment for questions.

Engaged, well-trained staff who feel confident in vaccine communication are better equipped to influence patients and reduce hesitancy.



Targeted Provider Support and Education

Providers may struggle to keep up with changing vaccine guidelines; targeted education and support improve adherence and patient care.

STRATEGIES:

- » **Keep direct communication with providers.** Reach out individually or in person rather than relying solely on group emails or messages.
- » **Use decision support tools.** Use resources like UpToDate to provide timely, accurate guidance.
- » **Provide data-informed training.** Analyze vaccination data to identify providers needing additional support and tailor training accordingly.
- » **Reduce provider burden.** Implement EHR flags or pending orders to notify providers of patients due for vaccines.

Combining data, technology, and direct engagement allows programs to give providers the support they need to achieve vaccination goals.

SAC HEALTH

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

SAC HEALTH - SAN BERNARDINO, CA

SAC Health, a federally qualified health center serving the Inland Empire region of Southern California, established the Strategic Approach to Vaccination Excellence Program (SAVE). SAVE uses a data-driven approach to target parents, guardians, and their children for timely child and adolescent immunizations. As part of SAVE, population health workers conduct pre-visit chart reviews to identify children and adolescents who are due for vaccines and then place pending immunization orders for providers. These pending orders make it easier for providers to identify and act on opportunities to vaccinate patients and increased the rate of high-priority patients who received needed childhood immunizations from 24% to 55%. SAC Health trains providers on how to utilize presumptive communication, equipping them to better understand and respond to vaccine hesitancy and fatigue among patients.

By tracking metrics on vaccine uptake, **SAC Health has also been able to identify providers who may need more support and provide more targeted training.**

Staffing Continuity and Role Stability

Maintaining consistent and qualified staffing is critical for the success of immunization programs. However, staffing gaps and turnover can slow outreach efforts and disrupt patient care.

STRATEGIES:

- » **Cross-train team members** to ensure coverage for critical roles and minimize disruptions during leaves or transitions.
- » **Define roles and processes.** Clearly define program processes and assign roles within the organization that will oversee those processes to maintain sustainability despite staff turnover.

Ensuring role clarity and cross-coverage helps programs maintain continuity even during staff transitions, enabling uninterrupted vaccine outreach and patient engagement.



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

CLINICA ESPERANZA / HOPE CLINIC – PROVIDENCE, RI

Clinica Esperanza / Hope Clinic is a free & charitable clinic that provides health care to uninsured individuals living in Rhode Island. Their program, Oportuna Vacuna, aims to increase vaccine confidence and uptake in historically underserved communities to reduce vaccine-preventable infectious diseases. A key element of this program involves training the clinic's multilingual and multicultural community health workers, or Navegantes, about vaccine preventable diseases and the importance of vaccination. Navegantes share similar ethnic and cultural backgrounds, languages, and norms as the communities they serve, and as a result often share similar concerns and hesitancies about vaccines. To promote vaccine literacy and confidence among their Navegantes, Clinica Esperanza hosts regular lunch and learn sessions. The topics of these lunch and learn sessions are informed by Navegantes' concerns or gaps in understanding. For example, a priest from a Catholic, Spanish-speaking church was invited to a lunch and learn to discuss religious misconceptions related to vaccines.

With this training, **Navegantes are better equipped to address vaccine hesitancy, misinformation, and fatigue among the patients they serve.**





[READ MORE ABOUT COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE NETWORK](#) 



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE NETWORK – NEW YORK, NY

Community Healthcare Network (CHN), a federally qualified health center serving New York City, has spearheaded an initiative to improve vaccination rates and infectious disease care for those living with HIV. To ensure the success of this initiative, CHN has prioritized provider training and support. CHN developed educational materials and trainings to help providers understand vaccine guidelines for patients with HIV, including resources to help providers understand the nuances of when to vaccinate HIV patients for Measles, Mumps, Rubella, and Varicella. CHN implemented automated pre-visit planning alerts for HPV vaccination, allowing providers to easily track at point of care whether a patient is due for their first, second, or third dose of the vaccine.

CHN also generates vaccine data reports by site, allowing providers to understand how they are performing compared to their peers and **enabling CHN to identify providers who may need additional training and support.**



RELATIONSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Building and maintaining sustainable partnerships is key to effectively serving your patients and fulfilling your mission. Through developing a network of trusted partners, awardees are able to build rapport and expand their reach within their community, connect their patients with a greater array of services and support, recruit staff and interns, and tap into expertise to enhance their programs and operations.

Identifying and Building Strong Partnerships

Some strategies for building strong partnerships include:

- » **Pause to consider the benefits of a potential partnership for the organization's patients and/or mission** to facilitate effective prioritization of limited resources, foster smoother collaboration, ensure mutual benefit, and maintain the integrity of the program's approach. If a partnership does not benefit the organization at the moment, have an honest conversation with the potential partner, but be sure to keep the door open for future collaboration.
- » **Demonstrate tangible value to foster buy-in and shared ownership.** To reinforce commitment and motivate ongoing collaboration, demonstrate how the partnership will benefit a partner's patients/clients or staff — whether through enhanced access to services, resources, training, or tools.
- » **Pursue partnerships beyond the healthcare sector.** Build relationships beyond healthcare, such as in education, housing, mental health, food security, and legal services, to allow for holistic patient support and address social determinants of health. Consider partnering with universities and the corporate sector to facilitate access to consultation support for your organization.
- » **Consider multiple strategies to identify partners.** Engage in street-level networking to discover potential collaborators. When participating in community events, visit other organizations with a presence there to learn about their work and identify potential areas for collaboration. When you spot a gap in patient services or support, proactively seek out and contact organizations that can help address it.
- » **Invest time to understand partners' needs and build authentic relationships.** Dedicate time to listening, engaging, and educating partners before making requests to create credibility and ensure alignment with community needs. This allows an organization to learn from partners' experience and expertise, helps to identify and address barriers to collaboration, and helps partners feel valued. This process strengthens alignment and supports more effective, culturally responsive interventions. This is especially important for partners that serve vulnerable populations such as victims of domestic violence and asylum seekers.
- » **Adapt relationship-building strategies for diverse communities.** Tailor approaches to engagement based on partners' preferences and needs to demonstrate cultural sensitivity, flexibility, and responsiveness and to lay the foundation for sustainable collaboration.

Sustaining Partnerships

- » **Maintain consistency and follow-up.** Establish regular check-ins, communication, and responsiveness to reinforce trust and shared commitment. To maintain regular engagement with partners, consider: (1) establishing regular, one-on-one meetings with a partner, (2) regularly attending or cohosting community events with partners, (3) inviting partners to a regular, informal ‘meet and greet’ at one’s clinic, and (4) hosting lunch and learns or webinars to bring partners together around a specific topic.
- » **Clarify roles and expectations** to reduce miscommunication, duplication of effort, and partner frustration. Consider using Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) as tools for clearly defining and documenting roles and expectations.
- » **Build the internal infrastructure to support sustainable collaboration.** Establish committees, standardize processes, document protocols and key information, cross-train staff, and develop succession plans for partner engagement and outreach. These processes and infrastructure support consistent collaboration, even during staff transitions or organizational changes.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

SYMBA CENTER - VICTORVILLE, CA

Symba Center is a free & charitable clinic that aims to reduce vaccine preventable infectious diseases through outreach, education, and vaccination of the unhoused population in San Bernardino County. Symba Center has long-standing relationships with shelters in San Bernardino County, enabling them to provide vaccines and infectious disease care on site. Symba Center has also been pursuing and establishing new partnerships with mission-aligned organizations to expand their reach.

Through a partnership with the City of Victorville’s Code Enforcement team and the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Houseless Outreach and Proactive Enforcement team, **Symba Center has been able to provide infectious disease care in homeless encampments.**

Symba Center has also collaborated closely with the director of a local Domestic Violence shelter to identify and address barriers to providing infectious disease care to unhoused victims of domestic violence, implementing additional protections to ensure they were able to provide care to this population in a way that made patients feel safe and comfortable.



WATCH THE SYMBA CENTER STORY





PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

CARE FOR THE HOMELESS - NEW YORK, NY



Care For the Homeless is a federally qualified health center that delivers culturally appropriate vaccine outreach across all five boroughs in shelters, safe havens, drop-in centers, soup kitchens, and street locations through its Vaccine Equal Access Project (VEAP) initiative. A key strength of the program is its long-standing relationships and partnerships with shelter providers. Its health centers have been embedded within shelters for more than ten years, creating deep trust. These established partnerships allow staff to easily access sites, set up tables, and engage directly with residents. Internally, strong coordination among clinical partners, nurses, nurse practitioners, and medical staff ensures smooth operations, with teams collaborating to coordinate dates, confirm vaccine supply, and arrange transfers across sites.

Together, these internal and external partnerships form the backbone of VEAP’s ability to deliver consistent, effective, and community-centered vaccine outreach.



REDUCING BARRIERS TO CARE

Ensuring equitable vaccine access requires addressing logistical, social, and systemic barriers that prevent patients from receiving care. Programs implemented strategies that brought vaccines and related resources directly to patients while building community trust.

Addressing Social Needs and Practical Barriers

Patients of FQHCs and free & charitable clinics often face a number of barriers to accessing care, such as limited access to transportation, inflexible work schedules, language barriers, comorbid health conditions, limited phone access, or more pressing unmet basic needs. Some strategies that clinics utilize to address these barriers include:

- » **Use flexible service models.** Offer walk-in clinics, appointments outside of traditional business hours, and telehealth appointments to meet patients where they are and accommodate diverse schedules.
- » **Provide multilingual care.** Prioritize hiring staff who share the same cultural and linguistic backgrounds as the patient population. Provide outreach and education materials in multiple languages.
- » **Connect patients with resources.** Provide access to transportation, food, blankets, legal assistance, pre-paid phones, and other essentials to help remove barriers to care. Link patients directly to supports or make referrals to community partners that can help. Build trust with patients by offering these connections and supports consistently.
- » **Make the most of every clinic visit.** Implement processes for flagging patients who are due for vaccines and offering vaccines while they are at the clinic for other appointments.



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

DELTA HEALTH CENTER- MOUND BAYOU, MS

Delta Health Center, a federally qualified health center serving rural communities in the Mississippi Delta, has expanded its vaccination programs across all routine community outreach, trusted messengers, and digital tools to combat misinformation and reach underserved populations. Delta Health Center found that aligning the timing of outreach events with school calendars and key community events facilitated greater reach and engagement. For example, during spring break, the program hosted several pop-up events using a mobile unit to bring services directly to the community at a time that was convenient for children and their families.

Some other **outreach strategies that Delta Health Center has found to be effective for reaching and engaging their patients include cohosting events with community partners, advertising community events using CareMessage, and using ambassadors from the community to assist with vaccine outreach and education.**

WATCH THE DELTA HEALTH CENTER STORY



Mobile, Community-based Care

One strategy that grantees find to be effective for reducing barriers to care is offering care to patients out in the community at locations that are accessible and familiar to patients. Some grantees use mobile units to provide community-based care. This allows them to effectively reach patients facing transportation challenges, inflexible work schedules, or other barriers, including rural residents, individuals experiencing homelessness, and farmworkers. Others partner with other community organizations to host clinics on their premises, or to co-host events in the community. This is convenient for patients, who are able to receive multiple services and resources at a single location.

Bringing care into the community requires careful planning and coordination to maximize participation and resource efficiency. Some strategies for maximizing the impact of mobile, community-based care include:

- » **Be consistent.** Establish regular locations and schedules. Become a consistent presence in the community to build trust and increase engagement.
- » **Communicate.** Promote upcoming events to enhance community awareness and participation. To increase awareness of upcoming community events and mobile clinics post flyers, partner with trusted community organizations and leaders to help spread the word, and use patient communication tools (e.g., CareMessage) to notify patients in the area about the upcoming event.
- » **Maintain the mobile unit.** Technical issues and repairs are a common challenge among those operating mobile units for community-based care. To address these challenges establish routine maintenance protocols, designate a staff member to take ownership of unit maintenance, and establish a back-up plan for when technical issues arise.
- » **Implement strategies to address staffing-related barriers to providing mobile, community-based care.** Providing mobile, community-based care may require pulling staff away from the clinic. In addition, providing community-based care often requires more flexibility from staff, particularly for community events that occur outside of traditional business hours. To address these challenges cross-train staff, leverage students and interns with more flexible schedules, and conduct additional planning and coordination to ensure adequate staffing.
- » **Manage vaccines.** The number of vaccines that can be transported and stored using a mobile unit can be limited. Find ways to anticipate vaccine demand to help your organization better prepare for community-based events. In addition, be prepared to point patients to other opportunities to access vaccines in the event you run out.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

EMPOWER U – MIAMI, FL

Empower U is a federally qualified health center that provides vaccination, testing, and linkages to care for infectious diseases for their patients in Liberty City and surrounding areas in Miami-Dade County. To reduce barriers to care, Empower U uses a medical mobile unit to offer community-based vaccination, testing, and care for preventable infectious diseases. Empower U has also secured funding to cover the cost of vaccines, reducing cost-related barriers to vaccination for patients.

As a result of these efforts, Empower U has been able to increase vaccination rates for Hepatitis B and influenza.





PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

RURAL HEALTH MEDICAL PROGRAM - SELMA, AL

Rural Health Medical Program, a federally qualified health center serving six rural counties in Alabama, established the Rural Health Renaissance program to address the top five preventable infectious diseases in their area.

Rural Health utilizes a mobile clinic to provide infectious disease education and care out in their community, addressing a key barrier to infectious disease care in their area: transportation.

Some strategies that Rural Health has found greatly improve the mobile unit's functionality and efficiency include: (a) establishing an operational strategy for the mobile unit, including maintenance protocols, (b) cross-training the mobile unit driver to serve as both a patient service representative and the operational manager of the mobile unit, and (c) working with community partners to promote awareness and participation in mobile clinics.



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

AHS FAMILY HEALTH CENTER, CHICAGO, IL

AHS Family Health Center is a federally qualified health center that serves Chicago and nearby suburban communities in Cook County. A key strategy that AHS Family Health Center utilizes to reduce barriers to care for their patients is to leverage their Integrated Care Model. Medical assistants conduct pre-visit chart reviews for patients who are coming into the clinic for a primary, behavioral, or dental healthcare visit. When a patient is identified as being due for vaccines, a warm hand-off is conducted to a provider who is able to provide vaccine education and administer the vaccine.

This approach reduces key barriers to infectious disease care for patients, such as transportation and scheduling challenges, by making the most of each patient visit.



PATIENT OUTREACH

Awardees use comprehensive, multi-layered approaches to patient outreach aimed at increasing access, trust, and engagement. Strategies emphasize patient-centered and culturally responsive communication and integrate multiple outreach methods, embedding education alongside vaccination. Awardees leverage technology and communication platforms, strengthen community partnerships, and clarify staff roles to deliver consistent, effective messaging.

Patient-Centered and Culturally Responsive Outreach

Grantees have learned that the most effective outreach is patient centered, reflecting people’s cultural, linguistic, and community realities. Some strategies that sites use to implement patient-centered and culturally responsive outreach include:

- » **Employ staff who share the same cultural, linguistic, or religious backgrounds as the communities they serve.** Communication is not only about conveying information; it is also about connection. When staff share the same cultural, linguistic, or religious backgrounds as the communities they serve, patients feel more comfortable and open to engagement.
- » **Partner with trusted messengers** —such as peer outreach workers, religious leaders, school principals, and other trusted community members — who are able to conduct vaccine education and outreach in a way that is culturally appropriate for the patient population. Co-create materials with community members to ensure that messages are authentic, respectful, and relevant.
- » **Conduct outreach in a patient’s preferred language.** Messages delivered in a patient’s preferred language build credibility and improved engagement. Make outreach and education materials available in languages spoken by the community. To prepare these materials, partner with multilingual staff or community organizations, or use existing resources from trusted sources like the CDC.

By embedding cultural responsiveness and patient-centered values into all aspects of outreach, free clinics and FQHCs can build lasting trust, counter misinformation, improve vaccine and preventive service uptake, and advance equitable health outcomes.



When [a patient] finds somebody that they share a country with, a language, an appearance, you’re more likely to get through to them and convey the message... They’re more willing to open up and talk with you.”

– C-ASSIST Family Health Clinic



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

C-ASSIST FAMILY HEALTH CLINIC – GARDEN CITY, MI

C-ASSIST Family Health Clinic, a free & charitable clinic serving Wayne County Michigan, launched a multi-faceted, culturally responsive vaccine outreach campaign.

As part of the campaign, they partner with trusted community messengers, such as the Imam of a local Muslim congregation and the principal of a local school, to host vaccine outreach and education events.

They employ outreach workers from the same ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds as the patients they serve, facilitating greater trust and engagement from patients. At community-based outreach events, C-ASSIST couples vaccine education with the opportunity to receive the vaccine, increasing vaccine uptake. C-ASSIST has also developed a portfolio of culturally responsive vaccine education and outreach materials in Arabic, English, and Spanish, including fact sheets, phone call and text scripts, short educational videos, social media posts, ad campaigns, and webinars.



Multimodal and Integrated Outreach Strategies

Using multiple outreach methods is critical to reaching diverse patient populations effectively. Multimodal approaches ensure that outreach reaches patients with different preferences and access levels. Some strategies that grantees have found to be effective for reaching and engaging their patients include:

- » **Use targeted, individualized outreach.** Targeted, individualized outreach is often the most effective approach to reach and engage individuals who are experiencing vaccine hesitancy or mistrust. Use nurses, medical assistants, or community health workers to call patients who are due for vaccines and encourage them to schedule an appointment to get vaccinated. Conduct pre-visit chart reviews to identify patients due for vaccines and prompt providers to offer those vaccines during their visit. These one-on-one interactions offer an opportunity for staff to better understand and address barriers to vaccination or sources of vaccine hesitancy and mistrust. Given that this approach is more time intensive, focus these efforts on more targeted patient rosters, such as for those at higher risk of infectious disease.
- » **Use text messaging platforms, such as CareMessage, EHRs, and Whatsapp, to reach out to patients with vaccine information and reminders.** These platforms offer a number of useful features, such as automated messaging and two-way communication. These platforms also make it possible for organizations to more efficiently reach a larger share of patients. However, this approach is often most effective for patients who were already interested in vaccines, or for whom it is preferable or more convenient to communicate via text.
- » **Use mobile clinics to provide infectious disease care and vaccines out in the community.** This approach is particularly effective for communities that face significant barriers to visiting the clinic, such as rural communities, rough sleeping and homeless populations, and farmworkers.
- » **Organize community-based events.** Partner with other community organizations to host or participate in outreach events and vaccine clinics out in the community. Host events or clinics in familiar, trusted settings, such as at local schools or faith-based meetings. When co-hosting events or co-locating services with other community partners, patients can often access a variety of resources and services. This is convenient for patients and helps organizations reach members of the community who they may not have exposure to otherwise.
- » **Use social media to reach and engage patients.** To effectively use social media: (1) have a clear understanding of the intended audience, (2) focus on a smaller number of platforms that are appropriate for the patient population and that the organization has the capacity to support, and (3) partner with respected community messengers or influencers to create content.

Hybrid, community-centered outreach strategies are essential for both efficiency and trust-building. Effectiveness arises from integrating digital tools with broader outreach strategies, balancing automation with personalized communication. By layering outreach methods, connecting to community settings, and integrating preventive services, organizations can achieve greater engagement, higher uptake, and stronger health outcomes across diverse patient populations.



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

HOUSING WORKS – BROOKLYN, NY

Housing Works is a network of federally qualified health centers that serves homeless and low-income New Yorkers who face multiple social and structural barriers to infectious disease care.

Through its VAXOUTLOUD initiative, **Housing Works employs peer vaccine messengers to conduct vaccine education and outreach.** These peer messengers reflect the communities they serve, which fosters trust and enhances message credibility among patients.

Peer vaccine messengers receive continuous training to ensure they understand the importance of vaccines and are up to date on vaccine guidelines and community concerns. They are empowered to shape the messaging for vaccine education and outreach, tailoring the language to ensure it resonates with the communities they serve. Other strategies that Housing Works utilizes to reach and engage their patient population include launching a #VAXOUTLOUD social media campaign, partnering with key influencers to promote vaccines, and conducting education and outreach at night venues, Kiki Balls, homeless shelters, migrant-focused spaces and other trusted environments where marginalized communities gather. Follow Housing Works @HWYPS.

Communication Technology

Messaging platforms, such as CareMessage, enable grantees to expand their reach. Some ways in which grantees use these platforms include to share vaccine education, alert patients of vaccine availability, notify patients of upcoming mobile clinics or community events in their area, conduct targeted outreach to patients due for vaccines, and for two-way communication with patients. Overall, this technology can be a great tool, but its effectiveness depends on strategic implementation and thoughtful management.

Some challenges that grantees have experienced while utilizing these platforms include maintaining accurate patient contact lists, navigating vendor restrictions, and limited staff capacity to respond to messages.

Some strategies that grantees use to overcome these challenges and facilitate sustainable implementation of these tools include:

- » **Send messages in smaller, targeted batches.** This helps to ensure that staff have capacity to promptly respond to patients.
- » **Communicate with third-party vendors.** This communication helps to increase understanding of any restrictions on messaging and to reduce the likelihood that messages are blocked.
- » **Designate sufficient time to train staff.** There can be a learning curve not only for using these tools, but for learning how to effectively communicate in this medium.
- » **Ensure that responsibility and processes for managing these tools are clearly defined and integrated into internal workflows.**

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

FAMILY CHRISTIAN HEALTH CENTER – HARVEY, IL

Family Christian Health Center (FCHC), a federally qualified health center serving Chicago Southland areas, implemented a campaign to improve vaccination rates and address barriers to care impacting their largely African American and Hispanic patient population. FCHC has developed a strong network of community partners – including local schools, senior centers, and churches – to host vaccine outreach events and mobile clinics out in the community. FCHC has also used the messaging platform, CareMessage, as a tool for vaccine education and outreach.

To date, FCHC has been able to use CareMessage to reach about 75% of their patient population with vaccine education and outreach.





DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING



Data-driven decision-making is a critical strategy across awardees, enabling improvements in vaccine delivery, patient engagement, and provider performance.

While awardees have faced challenges such as incomplete records, fragmented systems, and large patient volumes, they successfully leverage tools like dashboards, registries, mobile units, and targeted outreach to translate data into actionable strategies. Overall, the findings are encouraging, demonstrating that structured systems combined with tailored, patient-centered approaches can lead to meaningful improvements in both the efficiency and equity of care.

Use Data to Drive Outreach and Engagement

Leverage data to inform outreach and engagement, adapting approaches to meet the needs of patient populations and address local barriers. Use data strategically to prioritize outreach, identify gaps, and make services more patient centered. Leverage data to more effectively target outreach to those who are unvaccinated or under-vaccinated, to communities experiencing vaccine outbreaks or hotspots, and to communities with the lowest rates of vaccination. Analyze data to identify unmet patient needs and gaps in care and then leverage those insights to drive decisions around expanding services and forming strategic partnerships.

Adopt Strategies for Accurate and Integrated Data Management

Ensuring accurate and integrated data has been a persistent challenge across awardees. Some strategies awardees use to address these challenges include:

- » **Cross-check data.** Cross-check internal EHR data with external vaccine registries to avoid duplicative outreach and ensure that patients who are already vaccinated are not unnecessarily contacted.
- » **Standardize data collection requirements and processes.** Create standard expectations and processes for inputting, pulling, and utilizing data to ensure that staff are on the same page.
- » **Train staff.** Frontline staff play a crucial role in ensuring that data is consistently and accurately tracked. To promote data quality, train staff on what the data means, how to track the data, and why it is important.

Such strategies enhance outreach accuracy, improve reporting quality, and ensure that resources are allocated efficiently while maintaining safe and coordinated service delivery.

Continuously Monitor for Emerging Needs

Consistent data monitoring, combined with targeted outreach and adaptive strategies, enables organizations to respond to emerging trends, address patient concerns, and identify gaps in real-time. To establish effective data monitoring, identify key metrics, establish appropriate monitoring schedules, and leverage EHRs and other data systems to automate data tracking.

Visualize and Share Data to Motivate Providers

Use visual data presentations to engage and motivate providers. Tailor visuals with benchmarking, peer comparisons, and clear graphics to make key insights easy to see and understand.

Design clear and relatable dashboards, utilize humor or gamification, and emphasize positive reinforcement over punitive evaluation. Data is more actionable when presented in ways that foster collaboration and transparency.

Use Patient-Centered Data

Solicit feedback from patients and frontline staff to better understand patients' preferences, needs, and concerns. Prioritize patient-centered insights to better address barriers such as transportation, access, or vaccine hesitancy, while ensuring interventions are both practical and meaningful for patients.

Organizations can adapt these strategies by developing processes for routine patient and staff input, creating feedback loops to inform program adjustments, and designing communications and services that respond directly to identified needs. Using patient-centered data helps ensure interventions are relevant, reduces unnecessary resource use, and strengthens patient engagement and trust.



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

COMMUNITY OF HOPE – WASHINGTON, DC

Community of Hope is a federally qualified health center that provides targeted outreach and education to patients who are behind on key vaccines. To ensure efforts are focused where they are needed most, the organization uses the DC Immunization Registry to identify discrepancies and clean patient records, reducing frustration and freeing up resources for those truly overdue for vaccines. Serving patients across DC, Maryland, and Virginia can create challenges, as state-based registries sometimes result in incomplete or mismatched data.

By reconciling EHR information with the registry, staff are better able to prioritize outreach through targeted CareMessage campaigns.

Community of Hope also implemented a workflow in their population health management system to have providers input a reason why a patient did not receive a vaccine that they were due for during their visit, allowing for more informed, targeted follow-up from a nurse.



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY FARMWORKER HEALTH PROGRAM – BOSTON, MA

The Connecticut River Valley Farmworker Health Program (CRVFHP) is a federally qualified health center and an initiative of the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers (MLCHC). CRVFHP improves access to health care for farmworkers and their families by providing primary care services and community-based outreach through a contracted services model with five health center partners operating 20 locations across the Connecticut River Valley. To support long-term program sustainability and consistent service delivery across partners, CRVFHP has implemented practices that strengthen coordination, accountability, and shared responsibility for infectious disease prevention. These include integrating prevention and reporting expectations and aligning outreach documentation to support continuity of care and program monitoring. CRVFHP further promotes data-driven decision making and sustainability by engaging patients and frontline staff to inform service delivery, identify workforce development needs, and guide strategic outreach and geographic expansion.

Together, these efforts strengthen partner capacity, promote preventive care, and support durable systems that improve health outcomes for farmworkers and their families over time.

DECLARACIÓN DE INFORMACIÓN DE LA VACUNA

Vacuna contra el virus del papiloma humano (VPH): Lo que necesita saber

Por qué es necesario vacunarse?

La vacuna contra el VPH (virus del papiloma humano) puede prevenir la infección por algunos tipos de virus del papiloma humano.

Las infecciones por el VPH pueden causar ciertos tipos de cáncer, como:

- cáncer cervical, vaginal y vulvar en mujeres
- cáncer de pene en hombres
- cáncer anal tanto en hombres como en mujeres
- cáncer de las amígdalas, la base de la lengua y la parte posterior de la garganta (cáncer bucofaringeo) tanto en hombres como en mujeres.

Las infecciones por el VPH también pueden causar verrugas anogenitales.

La vacuna contra el VPH puede prevenir más de 90 % de los tipos de cáncer que causa el VPH.

El VPH se transmite por contacto íntimo piel con piel o por contacto sexual. Las infecciones por VPH son comunes.

La vacuna contra el VPH se puede administrar a adolescentes de 11 a 12 años, así como a adolescentes entre el quince y el promedio de edad sexual.

La mayoría de los hombres que reciben la primera dosis antes de los 15 años y después 1 dosis de la vacuna contra el VPH. Los hombres que reciben la primera dosis a los 15 años o después 1 dosis pueden recibir una tercera dosis adicional. Los hombres que reciben una tercera dosis adicional pueden proporcionar más información.

Se puede administrar la vacuna contra el VPH al mismo tiempo que otras vacunas.

3. Hable con su proveedor de atención médica

Informe a su proveedor de vacunas si le presenta que recibe la vacuna:

- Ha tenido una reacción alérgica después de una vacuna.
- Ha tenido una reacción alérgica de la vacuna contra el VPH.



MANAGING VACCINE AND INFECTIOUS DISEASE TREATMENT SUPPLIES



Offering vaccines and infectious disease treatment at low to no cost to patients is key to reducing barriers to care. Grantees weave together funding from a variety of resources, leverage partnerships, and think critically about their processes to ensure that they can provide these resources to their patients. As shifting government priorities at the federal and state level have led to increased uncertainty and gaps in funding for vaccines, many grantees have had to adjust to facilitate continued access to vaccines and infectious disease treatment for their patients.

Strategies for Securing Low-to-No Cost Vaccines for Patients

- » **Leverage patient assistance programs.** Patient Assistance Programs (PAP) offered by pharmaceutical companies provide access to free and low-cost vaccines for patients who are uninsured or underinsured. Participating in PAPs can involve a lot of administrative work, so be prepared to designate sufficient staff time for the application process. In addition, some programs require that organizations have a vaccine stock established, which can be a barrier to participation for some organizations. Nonetheless, PAPs can be a significant resource for FQHCs and free & charitable clinics, allowing organizations to maintain a sustainable vaccine supply even when grant funding ends.
- » **Participate in public vaccine programs,** such as the Section 317 Immunization Program and Vaccines for Children (VFC), to cover the cost of vaccines for uninsured and underinsured patients and to meet community needs without incurring prohibitive costs.
- » **Access grants from private foundations** to offset the high cost of vaccines for uninsured or underinsured patients.
- » **Build strategic partnerships.** Partner with a wide variety of organizations, including departments of health, pharmacies, and corporations (i.e., Costco), to access free or low-cost vaccines and infectious disease treatment supplies.

- » **Diversify your funding strategies.** Changes in government programs or emergency funding can create gaps in vaccine availability. To build resilience and ensure continuity, proactively plan for a broader mix of funding and procurement sources.



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

MALLERY COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER – LEXINGTON, MS

Mallery Community Health Center is a federally qualified health center providing infectious disease care and vaccines to under-resourced and underserved communities in the Mississippi Delta. With funding from the Innovation Awards in Community Health, Mallery Community Health Center purchased Accushelf to better monitor their vaccine inventory.

Thanks to Accushelf, Mallery Community Health Center has been able to reduce errors in vaccine counts and administration. Accushelf also monitors vaccine temperatures to ensure compliance with vaccine storage requirements.

Strategies for Efficiently Managing Vaccine Stock

- » **Implement inventory control measures.** Order smaller quantities, monitor storage temperature, and use technology like Accushelf to reduce waste and ensure vaccine viability.
- » **Adapt to fluctuating demand.** To better track and predict fluctuating vaccine demand, utilize data dashboards and other data monitoring strategies. Adjust the number of vaccines purchased to align with demand, purchasing more vaccines during periods of greater demand such as back-to-school season, flu season, and growing season and then maintaining more limited vaccine stock in the off-seasons.
- » **Utilize inventory management programs (e.g., VaxCares).** Inventory management programs, such as VaxCares, can purchase vaccines on behalf of organizations, manage inventory, provide billing support, and track usage, reducing gaps in care for private pay patients.
- » **Collaborate with other health centers and clinics in your area to mitigate vaccine supply challenges.** To address supply gaps, refer patients to other partners who have access to vaccine stock. In addition, donate surplus vaccine supplies to other organizations in your area to strengthen partnerships.

Proactive vaccine supply management combines financial support, partnerships, and technology. By establishing sustainable procurement and inventory strategies, organizations can ensure equitable and uninterrupted access to vaccinations for diverse populations.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

SHEPHERD'S CLINIC – BALTIMORE, MD

Shepherd's Clinic is a free & charitable clinic that implements *IGNITE! Fire Up Your Immunity*, combining interactive remote education, multilingual materials, community events, and clinic-based education with a waiting-room video series. The clinic also successfully leverages Patient Assistance Programs (PAPs) from pharmaceutical companies to secure vaccines and medications that were previously unavailable, ensuring long-term access for high-need patients and maintaining in-house stock even after grant funding ends. Shepherd's Clinic strategically coordinates vaccine efforts based on seasonal priorities and availability, providing clear, evidence-based education about which vaccines are needed, who is most at risk, and when boosters are required, helping to reduce hesitancy and misinformation. The clinic partners with local organizations to extend access for underserved and migrant populations, filling critical gaps without redirecting patients from their primary care sites.

Through collaboration, resource optimization, and innovative use of PAPs, **Shepherd's Clinic strengthened its ability to manage vaccine and infectious disease treatment supplies** while improving community health outcomes.



LOOKING AHEAD

Through innovative approaches, deep community roots, and unwavering commitment to their patients, the 19 awardees of the *Innovation Awards in Community Health: Addressing Infectious Disease in Underserved Communities* demonstrated the power of philanthropic investment in reducing structural barriers and expanding access to vaccine-preventable infectious disease services. With support from The Pfizer Foundation, these safety-net providers strengthened community trust while delivering culturally responsive care.

Their work unfolded amid shifting policies, changing reimbursement structures, inconsistent access to public funding, and persistent structural challenges such as misinformation, stigma, and the complex needs of patients experiencing homelessness, migration, language barriers, or multiple chronic conditions.

Despite these barriers, grantees created community-driven solutions: adapting clinic workflows, deploying mobile and pop-up services, partnering with trusted local organizations, and tailoring communication strategies to improve access and outreach. These innovations showed how flexible funding enables providers to respond effectively as policies evolve, needs shift, and the broader healthcare and climate landscape continues to change.

Awardees also recognized that trust in prevention is inseparable from trust in the healthcare system. By meeting patients where they are, honoring cultural and linguistic needs, and showing reliability in moments of uncertainty, they strengthened the relationships that support sustained infectious disease prevention and vaccine confidence.

Direct Relief and The Pfizer Foundation remain committed to this work, recognizing that community-based healthcare organizations are uniquely positioned to build trust, respond with agility, and advance health equity. Their continued partnership reflects a shared belief in the essential role of these providers and the importance of investing in local, innovative solutions.

Direct Relief extends sincere thanks to The Pfizer Foundation for its ongoing partnership and steadfast support of community healthcare providers nationwide.





Direct Relief is a humanitarian aid organization that works to improve the health and lives of people affected by poverty, disaster, and civil unrest.

For more information,
please visit [directrelief.org](https://www.directrelief.org)

