

45 employees
One public health clinic
Serving a population of 70,000
Grays Harbor County residents



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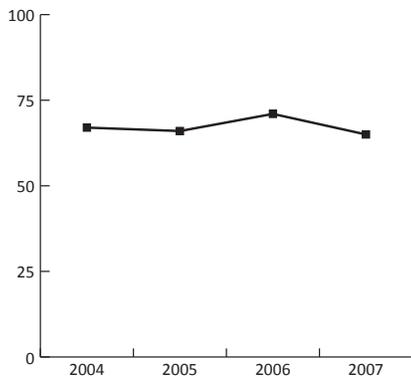
Improving Immunization Rates of Preschool Children

Plan

1. Getting Started

Over the last decade, the number of recommended immunization doses for 19-35 month olds has increased dramatically but Washington State's immunization rates have declined slightly and continue to be among the lowest in the nation.

Percentage of preschool-aged children with complete immunization coverage, Washington State



Source: National Center for Health Statistics

The Grays Harbor County Public Health Department (GHCPHD) seeks to improve childhood immunization rates in Grays Harbor County.

2. Assemble the Team

Team members were assigned to the project based on their expertise and experience related to the project initiative (immunizations, data collection and analysis, provision of education to health care providers). Team members included the Public Health Education and Evaluation Manager, the Assessment Coordinator, the Clinical Services Supervisor and the Immunization Program Nurse.

AIM Statement

We want to increase available data on current preschool immunization coverage levels among local children in order to increase public health and provider understanding of how their practices contribute to overall county immunization rates and how provider practice rates compare to the county average and establish a baseline rate in the context of universal access to publicly-funded vaccines against which to gauge future system performance following upcoming changes in eligibility for publicly-funded vaccines in Washington State. We do this in order to preserve and improve childhood immunization rates in Grays Harbor County.

3. Examine the Current Approach

A local study completed in 1998 estimated a 76% rate of complete vaccination for the county's 19-35 month old children, which at that time was commensurate with the Washington State rate.

To assess the immunization coverage rates of children serviced by local Vaccine For Children (VFC) providers in Grays Harbor County, public health nurses utilize the CDC's AFIX process. During the AFIX process, providers learn the 4:3:1:3:3:1:4 coverage rate of their 24-35 month old patients, but current county-wide data is not available as a point of comparison.

4. Identify Potential Solutions

Birth certificate follow-back studies are considered a best practice in estimating local immunization coverage rates among preschool children.

Replicating a birth certificate follow-back study completed in 1998 with a sample size of 200 24-35 month olds would provide both a current estimate of county-wide immunization coverage and a baseline in the context of universal access. Increasing the sample size to 375 19-35 month olds would also allow for limited comparability to 1998 coverage rates.

The team decides to increase the sample size to allow for comparability between the current study and the 1998 study.

Immunization Coverage Rates, Grays Harbor County

	2009	1998
4:3:1:3		
• 19-35 months old	83%	76%
4:3:1:3:3:1:4		
• 24-35 months old	75%	-
• 19-35 months old	74%	-
4:3:1:3:3:1:4:2:3:yearly flu		
• 24-35 months old	2%	-
• 19-35 months old	3%	-

5. Develop an Improvement Theory

If GHCPHD enhances immunization provider education with current county-wide immunization coverage rates *then* providers will better understand how their practices contribute and compare to overall county immunization rates as measured by pre and post assessments.

Do

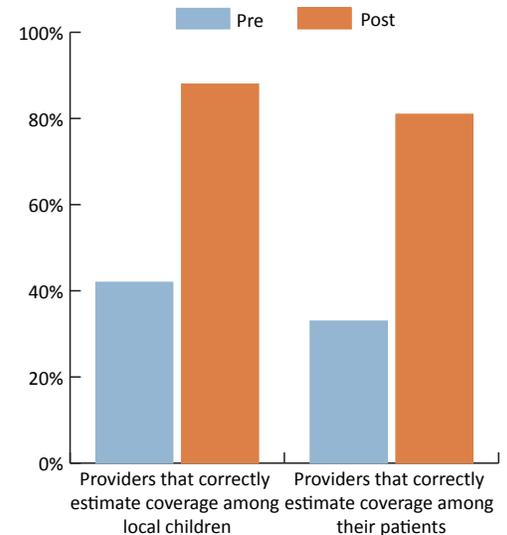
6. Test the Theory

Pre and post surveys administered at provider education sessions were used to assess provider knowledge.

Study

7. Study the Results

Top 3 barriers to immunizations, identified by local VFC providers	
Pre-	Post-
1. Missed appointments	1. Missed appointments
2. Parent unaware child needs add'l vaccines	2. Parent does not bring immunization records with them to child's appointment
3. Parental concern about vaccine safety	3. Parent unaware child needs add'l vaccines



Act

8. Standardize the Improvement or Develop New Theory

A one-page fact sheet summarizing the results of the birth certificate follow-back study were distributed to all local VFC providers and posted on *HealthyGH.org*.

9. Establish Future Plans

The Department's 2011 Immunization Workplan will include objectives and activities to:

- Increase the number of providers who have an active immunization reminder/recall system in place.
- Increase the number of providers who use CHILD Profile to look up immunization data on their patients at every appointment.
- Decrease missed opportunities due to provider misinformation about when vaccination is contraindicated during illness.