
**Report to
The Vermont Legislature**

**Vermont Immunization Program Activities to Support Public Health
2019 Report to the Legislature**

In Accordance with H.542 (2019), Section E.312.1, An act relating to making appropriations for the support of government

Submitted to: House Committee on Health Care
Senate Committee on Health and Welfare

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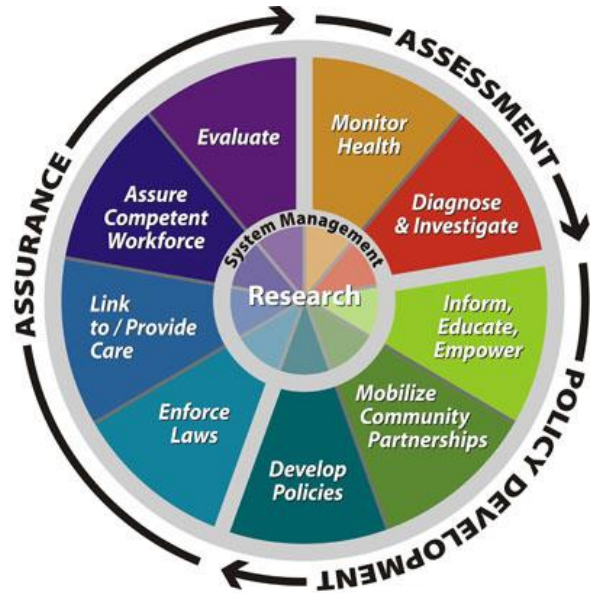
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**Vermont Immunization Program Activities to Support Public Health
July 1, 2019**

Introduction

The three core functions of public health are **assurance, policy development, and assessment**. The Vermont Department of Health Immunization Program initiatives to increase immunization rates and prevent disease are grouped under these categories.



Assurance

The Immunization Program assures vaccine is accessible to all Vermonters in accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations by:

Providing for existing and emerging vaccine needs across Vermont

To accomplish this, the Immunization Program:

- Offers education to providers and the public and offers vaccinations to high-risk groups in response to the increased risk of vaccine preventable disease outbreaks. Recent examples include:
 - Offering a measles provider webinar with participation from over 185 practices, and
 - Coordinating clinics to offer hepatitis A vaccine statewide to people at homeless shelters and syringe service programs to prevent a hepatitis A outbreak in Vermont.
- Offers monthly immunization clinics at all 12 District Offices for uninsured Vermonters up to 65 years of age (people 65 and older are eligible for Medicare).
- Partners with local providers in areas where access to primary care is limited and immunization coverage is low to offer school-located HPV clinics.

Supporting Vermont Providers

To accomplish this, the Immunization Program:

- Conducts planning, implementation, and evaluation for the federal Vaccines for Children and state Vaccines for Adults programs supporting a universal vaccine program that distributes approximately \$16,000,000 in vaccines annually in Vermont.
- Offers CDC-structured quality improvement visits to all Vermont practices enrolled in the Vaccines for Children and Vaccines for Adults programs using practice-specific immunization coverage reports and evidence-based strategies to improve rates.
 - The Program coordinates these efforts with the Vermont Blueprint for Health.
- Provides education and oversight to ensure vaccine storage and handling in Vermont practices meets CDC requirements to assure vaccine viability.
 - The Program provides and maintains continuous temperature monitoring devices used in all practices enrolled in the Vaccines for Children and Vaccine for Adults programs.

Monitoring and Reporting Child Care and School Immunization Rates

To accomplish this, the Immunization Program:

- Support child care facilities and schools in complying with all statutory requirements related to annual reporting by:
 - Providing guidance on how to comply with the law and rule, and offers guidance on communication with parents regarding immunizations.
 - Making aggregate data from child care facilities and schools publicly available.
 - Partnering with the Agency of Education to send letters to schools that describe their legal obligations regarding student immunization.

Strengthening Community Partnerships and Coalitions

To accomplish this, the Immunization Program:

- Convenes the statutorily-required Immunization Advisory Council and the Immunization Funding Advisory Committee to ensure input into Program priorities.
- Provides routine communication to healthcare providers through the monthly [Vermont Immunization Bulletin](#).
- Offers a biennial Immunization and Infectious Disease Conference for health care providers to provide timely relevant information.

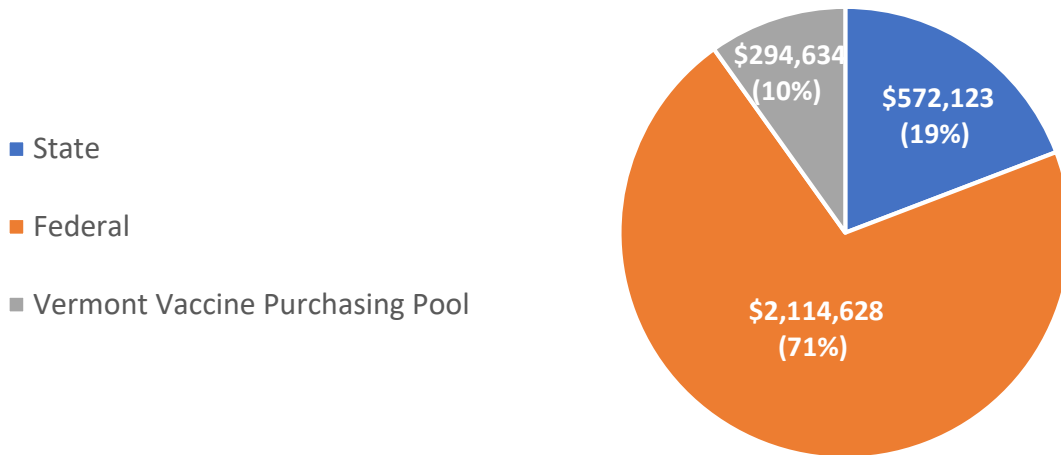
Policy Development

The Immunization Program supports development of state and federal policies that encourage immunization and protect Vermonters from vaccine preventable diseases.

To accomplish this, the Immunization Program:

- Uses annual funding awarded through the CDC Immunization Program Cooperative Agreement to fund staffing and operations to address the multiple requirements outlined in the CDC Immunization Program Operations Manual.

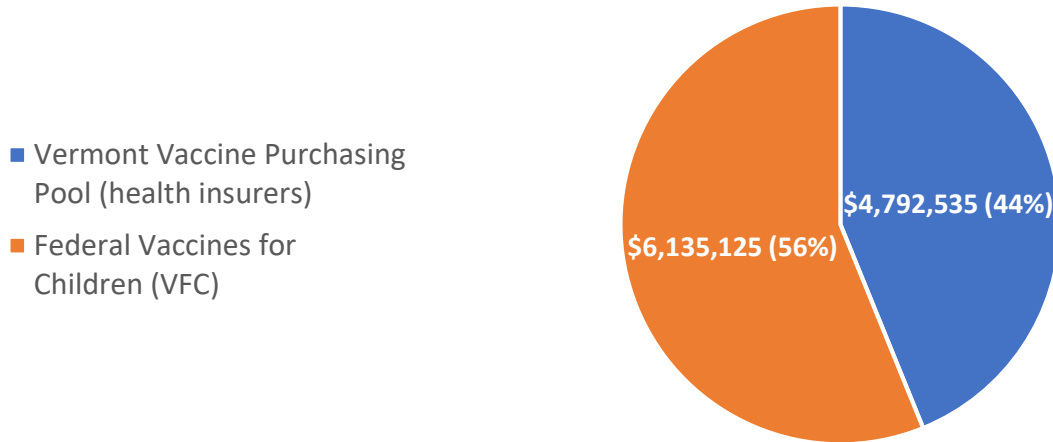
Immunization Operations Funding (State Fiscal Year '18)



Source: SFY18 Cost Allocation

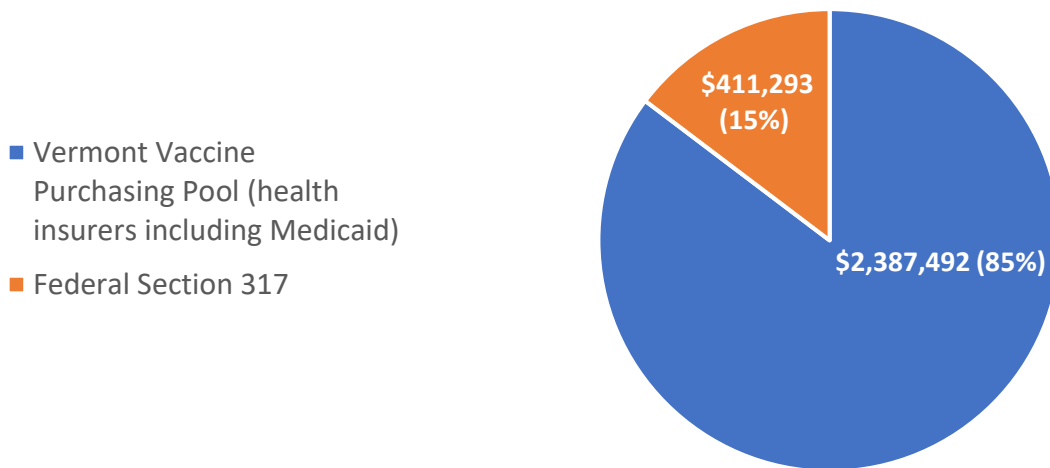
- Meets all statutory requirements found in 18 V.S.A. § 1130 in order to provide all vaccines recommended by the CDC to enrolled primary care practices at no cost to providers.
 - The Program coordinates efforts with the Immunization Funding Advisory Committee to set annual insurer rates.

Pediatric Vaccine Purchased from CDC (Federal Fiscal Year '18)



Source: FFY2018 CDC VTrckS

Adult Vaccine Purchased from CDC (Federal Fiscal Year '18)



Source: FFY2018 CDC VTrckS

- Collaborates with Vermont partners to increase understanding of vaccines and increase immunization rates. Partners include:
 - Primary Care Public Health Integration Team
 - UVM College of Medicine Public Health Projects course
 - HPV Stakeholders Team
 - Vermonters Taking Action Against Cancer Coalition
 - Vermont State School Nurses Association
- Conducts research in partnership with Dartmouth College to enhance understanding of how to effectively communicate the importance of vaccines to Vermonters.

Assessment

The Immunization Program monitors immunization coverage among children, teens, and adults in Vermont through national and state data sources.

To accomplish this, the Immunization Program:

- Assesses Vermont's immunization rates in comparison to regional and national rates as reported in the National Immunization Survey, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System and Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System.
- Collects state immunization data through the Vermont Immunization Registry and annual immunization reports from child care providers and all schools as required by Vermont law.
- Uses Immunization Registry data to send reminder notices to the parents and guardians of all children ages 8 months and 20 months who are not up to date on all CDC recommended vaccines.
- Conducts follow up with all pregnant people in Vermont who test positive for hepatitis B to ensure the infant receives vaccines indicated at birth and through their first year to prevent transmission. Shares key data points and initiatives through the [Immunization Program Annual Report](#).
- Makes all [immunization coverage reports](#) publicly available on the Health Department website.
- Uses the [Immunization Registry](#) to provide quarterly immunization coverage reports to primary care practices with a comparison to statewide data.
- Conducts a comprehensive analysis of immunization data to identify areas for improvement based on low immunization rates for a specific vaccine, among a population sub-group based on age, geographic area or income or to prevent a disease outbreak.

Appendix A: Vermont School Immunization Data

Vermont School Immunization Data, 2014-15 through 2018-19			Personal Belief Exemptions		Not "Exempt", or Meeting Vaccine Requirements
School Year	K-12 Enrollment	Medical Exemption	Religious Exemption	Philosophic Exemption*	Provisional Admission
2018-19	84,444	154	2,595	0	1,943
2017-18	85,246	176	2,495	0	2,098
2016-17	86,270	172	2,546	0	2,601
2015-16	86,929	189	494	3,109	2,131
2014-15	88,084	249	162	3,566	2,275

* Effective school year 2016-17, the philosophic exemption was eliminated.
Data is reported by grade, not age.