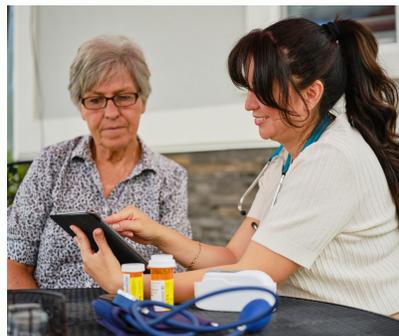


KANSAS IMMUNIZATION PROVIDER COMMUNICATION GUIDANCE



updated January 2023

Kansas Immunization Provider
Inter-Provider Communications Guidance
Updated January 2023

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*Content for this guidance manual was provided collaboratively by
KALHD, KHA, KAAP, KAFP, KPhA, KFMC, CCNKS, KDHE*

The Why of This Guide

In response to a survey completed in June 2022, this guide was created to improve relationships between immunization providers through communication guidance and information about best practices for vaccination. Inter-provider communication remains ever important as the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed communication gaps for immunization referrals and communication between providers about treatment plans.

To improve the Kansas “immunization neighborhood”, This document outlines communications considerations for immunization providers in Kansas to communicate better and more effectively, with the assistance of their respective membership organizations, and promote better vaccination coverage within the state and provide consistency in inter-provider communications. Throughout the pandemic, hospitals have been a key vaccination provider for the COVID-19 vaccine. Many hospitals offer flu vaccine and other vaccines to their patients and communities, however, may not be the primary provider of childhood and other wellness vaccines.

The ideas, considerations, and recommendations are subject to change and adaptation based on current infectious disease outbreaks and ACIP recommendations. This guide is not meant to, and should not, serve to avoid specific organizational decision chain of command, but rather serve as a guide for general best practices in communication.

How to Use This Guide

This guide was developed in collaboration with the Kansas Association of Local Health Departments (KALHD), Kansas Hospital Association (KHA), Kansas Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics (KAAP), Kansas Pharmacists Association (KPhA), and the Community Care Network of Kansas (CCNKS) to improve vaccination rates between providers in Kansas. Portions of this guide were developed by the membership organizations and have the most up to date information for that specific organization.

Contact Information

Your Membership Organizational Representatives

Additional questions, concerns, or special circumstances not covered here, can be directed to the seven organizations that provided content for this guide. Representatives and their contact information are outlined below.

Karen Braman

Kansas Hospital Association

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Community Care Network of Kansas
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785-233-8483

Kansas Department of Health and Environment Organization Contacts

The below contact information should be used to communicate with members of their team. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list. To reach this team by phone, please contact 877-296-0464.

Becky Prall

Immunization Section Chief
Becky.prall@kdhe.ks.gov

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Vaccine Safety and Distribution Coordinator
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Information about Transferring Vaccines

From time to time, vaccines may need to be transferred between immunization providers. KDHE allows for providers to transfer vaccines to each other through the KDHE KIP Re-Distribution list, which provides a comprehensive list of excess vaccines from various providers across the state. KDHE provides lists for private and vaccines for children (VFC) provider vaccine lists which can be [accessed on their website here](#).

All vaccines, including private and VFC vaccines, are eligible for transfer. However, VFC frozen vaccines like Varicella and Proquad will not be posted on the re-distribution list and providers are required to call the KDHE Topeka office at 785-296-6645 to request assistance from staff.

As a provider, KDHE requests the following of you to transfer your vaccines:

- Vaccines have a minimum of 90 days and max of 1 year before the expiration date
- The ordering provider (the one with the vaccine) is responsible for any doses that expire that have not yet been transferred.
- Vaccines eligible for transfer must be in full boxes
- Providers who accept vaccines from other providers are responsible for using the vaccine within their own practice in an appropriate time frame.
- Both the ordering provider and the provider accepting vaccines are required to document the movement of these doses on their monthly MIR/reconciliation reports as *transferred vaccines*.
- The on-call nurse consultant must be contacted prior to the transfer occurring. Once the transfer has been completed, both providers must notify the KIP program staff.

General Reminders about Using WebIZ

All providers are required to submit immunization records to the statewide immunization registry, KSWebIZ, per Kansas statute. The registry ensures that all providers have accurate immunization records that can be called upon as needed by the vaccinating provider and other providers.

Questions or concerns about the registry can be directed to the KS WebIZ Help Desk through the following means:

Phone (toll-free): 877-296-0464

Fax: 785-559-4227

kdhe.immunizationregistry@ks.gov

Communicating with Local Health Departments

When communicating with individual health departments, it is important to consider the governmental aspect of the work. Most local health departments (LHDs) are governed by county level funds and are bound to those rules and regulations. LHDs see patients of all types and creeds but see many individuals on Medicaid and Medicare regularly. According to recent state data, local health departments are responsible for vaccinating over 50% of all people who get vaccinations in the state.

Typical Hours

Most health departments follow county hours, which are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. However, a good portion are open from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekdays.

Types of Employees You Will Work With

All health departments are overseen by the County Commission and Local Board of Health, which both consist of elected positions. On a regular day to day basis, APRNs, RNs, and LPNs work at LHDs regularly.

Types of Vaccines Provided

Local health departments are required to provide all vaccines required for school and childcare entry (this is by Kansas statute). Recommended vaccines, including HPV and Influenza, can also be provided at the local health department. Most health departments have all vaccines on hand. But they can order them if they do not.

Typical Communications Systems and Record Keeping

Health departments, by state law, are required to keep records of almost all activities. Health departments keep both paper records and digital records depending on the county. All are required to use WebIZ for documenting vaccination.

Best Way to Communicate with Us

Local health departments are under similar regulations as city and county government. As such, it is best to communicate with them through email and phone.

We Communicate Effectively When

LHDs like templates and quick reading.

How We Will Most Likely Communicate with You

LHDs will likely communicate with you through email or through phone. However, not all LPNs or RNs have access to those accounts. Connecting with your local health department administrator will provide you with the best results.

How to Reach Us

The Kansas Association of Local Health Departments keeps an accurate list of all 100 LHD administrators and their email addresses on their website. In addition, most health department information can be accessed on county-wide websites.

Communicating with Community Pharmacies

Pharmacists have been vaccinating in Kansas for more than 20 years. Kansas law allows pharmacists to administer influenza vaccine to those 6 years and older and all other vaccines to those 12 years and older with a protocol with a physician. During the COVID-19 pandemic, federal authority extended pharmacists' authority to vaccinate certain types of vaccines down to 3 years of age. Community pharmacies vary widely between chain stores (such as Walgreens, CVS, Walmart, and Dillons) and your local independent pharmacy. Independent pharmacies have local authority to make decisions such as what types of vaccines to carry; chain pharmacies make that decision at a regional or national level.

Typical Hours

Most pharmacies are open approximately 9am-6pm weekdays and 9am – 1pm Saturdays. Chain pharmacies may have longer evening and weekend hours. Nearly all allow walk-in vaccinations without appointments, although many encourage appointments to decrease wait times.

Typical Employee Types

Immunizing pharmacists complete a 20h training program in immunization epidemiology and administration. Pharmacists are required by state law to complete 2h of immunization continuing education every licensure period. Pharmacy technicians and student pharmacists can also administer vaccines under the supervision of a pharmacist.

Types of Vaccines Provided

Many pharmacies focus on routine adult vaccinations such as influenza, pneumococcal, shingles, Tdap, and hepatitis A&B. Some pharmacies also offer vaccines for adolescents such as meningitis B and HPV. Specially trained pharmacies evaluate and administer vaccinations for international travel, such as rabies, cholera, and yellow fever.

Typical Communications Systems and Record Keeping

Per statute, pharmacies are required to notify either the patient's primary care provider, if identified by the patient, or the protocol physician, of each vaccine administration. Communication is usually in the form of a faxed notification or copy of the vaccine record.

Best Way to Communicate with Us

Phone calls are best for initial outreach – some pharmacies may prefer email for subsequent follow-up. Busiest times for pharmacies are Mondays and approximately 2h after opening, so calls between 11a-4p are best. Keep unscheduled calls short and sweet, as pharmacists answering questions will be taking time away from patient care activities such as immunizations!

How to Reach Us

All direct pharmacy phone numbers can all be obtained from the internet. Although many pharmacies have an automated response system, all have options to reach local staff.

Communicating with Pediatric Practices

Vaccines are a core component to pediatrics and a high priority among many topics pediatricians cover when caring for children. Pediatric practices across Kansas range from small, rural groups to large, urban practices, and from independent practices to groups owned or affiliated with a hospital. Immunization processes can vary based on practice type, location, and type of vaccine. Pediatricians care for patients from birth until the transition to adult care, typically between ages 18 and 21 for existing patients.

Typical Hours

Most pediatric practices follow regular business hours Monday-Friday, some with extended evening and Saturday hours for acute visits only. Some pediatricians may be away from the office for newborn care visits at the hospital early morning or over lunchtime.

Types of Employees You Will Work With

In addition to a variety of health care providers, pediatric practices often have management roles, including practice manager, clinical manager, and medical director. A manager may oversee vaccine administration, or a designated nurse may be responsible for vaccine ordering and management. It is best to ask a manager who oversees vaccine administration for their practice.

Types of Vaccines Provided

Pediatric practices that offer immunization will typically carry recommended childhood vaccines, and many will have VFC vaccines. In cases where a practice does not offer an immunization, they will refer patients to the local health department, pharmacy, or community health center for childhood vaccinations.

Typical Communications Systems and Record Keeping

Pediatric practices document all vaccinations within the patient's electronic health record, which is typically set up to communicate through an interface with WebIZ. Clinics that vaccinate might query WebIZ before preparing vaccines to verify that the patient has not been vaccinated elsewhere.

Best Way to Communicate with Us

It is best to work with the practice immunization lead or practice manager through phone or email. Practice managers are often away from their desk serving the needs of the clinic. For time sensitive issues, it is best to call the practice manager instead of email.

How We Will Most Likely Communicate with You

Pediatric practice representatives will likely communicate with you through email or through phone.

How to Reach Us

If you do not have a contact at your local pediatric practice, it is best to call and ask to speak to the practice or clinical manager.

Communicating with Federally Qualified Health Centers and Community-Based Clinics

Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and Community Based Clinics (CBPCCs) are community-based nonprofit or public organizations that provide high quality whole person care in situations where health care is difficult to access, such as for persons without insurance, Medicaid and/or Medicare beneficiaries, and/or persons living in rural and under-resourced areas. FQHCs and CBPCCs utilize a sliding fee scale to increase access to care for low -income individuals. FQHCs and CBPCCs provide services to all patients and generally accept a wide array of health insurances.

Typical Hours

FQHCs and CBPCCs are generally open Monday through Friday, from 8a-5pm. Some have early morning, evening, and weekend hours. Some FQHCs provide walk-in clinics to provide more accessible, on-demand care. Please check with the individual clinic for specific operating hours.

Typical Employee Types

FQHCs and CBPCCs are overseen by a governing board of directors; most and have an executive team with CEO, CFO, and COO. On a daily basis, FQHCs and CBPCCs generally employ a wide array of medical, behavioral, and dental clinicians and care coordination teams in order to provide comprehensive care. Some also include pharmacy staff with in-house pharmacies, substance use disorder counselors, vision specialists, and other specialty care professionals.

Types of Vaccines Provided

FQHCs and CBPCCs have access to and administer most vaccines. Many are VFC providers and offer lifespan vaccinations for their patients. FQHCs and CBPCCs participate in state and/or federal vaccine programs when appropriate. Depending on the clinic location and availability of vaccine, specialty vaccines may need to be ordered or transferred.

Typical Communications Systems and Record Keeping

Kansas FQHCs and most CBPCCS have electronic health record systems; many FQHCs also utilize a health management and quality improvement reporting platform; however, some may utilize paper records for certain activities. All FQHCs and CBPCCs report administration of vaccinations through WebIZ.

Best Ways to Communicate with Us

Phone calls or email is best for initial outreach. Connecting with the administration team or the vaccination coordinator within the health center will provide you with the best results.

How We Will Most Likely Communicate with You

FQHCs and CBPCCs most often communicate through email or via telephone.

How to Reach Us

Community Care Network of Kansas keeps an up-to-date list of members and contact information on the Community Care website, www.communitycareks.org. In addition, FQHCs can be located using HRSA's Find a Health Center tool, <https://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov/>

Common Communications Questions

Q: *Are all vaccine providers in Kansas really required to update records in WebIZ?*

A: Yes. State statute requires all vaccine providers to submit vaccine records to WebIZ. This helps with providing care to patients, decreasing duplicate doses, and being able to track immunization data.

Q: *To transfer vaccines to another provider, do you need to be a Vaccines for Children provider?*

A: No, you do not need to be a Vaccines for Children provider to transfer vaccines to other providers. All vaccines, including private and VFC vaccines are eligible for transfer.

Q: *Who do I contact if I have questions that are not covered in this booklet?*

A: You can contact your membership representative, who is listed on page 3 of this booklet.

Q: Do hospitals provide routine wellness vaccines?

A: Many hospitals provide annual flu vaccinations or other vaccinations that patients may be eligible for prior to discharge. For routine childhood and other wellness vaccines, individuals should contact their physician, pharmacy, local health department or clinic.