

Access to Immunization Services

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Chicago Family Health Center

Biography

- ▶ Practicing pediatrician for 21 years
- ▶ Medical Director in a community health center for sixteen years
- ▶ Three years practice in rural Ethiopia
- ▶ Ten years as Medical Consultant for Chicago's Head Start program
- ▶ Ten years working with a DCFS population

Community Health Centers

- ▶ Medically underserved populations— inner city, rural, migrant, homeless, public housing
- ▶ High percentage of Medicaid and uninsured patients
- ▶ More than 300 sites in Illinois
- ▶ See 996,000 patients annually in Illinois

Chicago Family Health Center

- ▶ Founded in 1977
- ▶ Four offices in South Chicago, Pullman, Roseland, East Side
- ▶ Sixteen physicians, four dentists
- ▶ Primary care, dentistry, nutrition, mental health, prenatal care, homeless shelters
- ▶ 19,000 unduplicated patients, 89,000 encounters
- ▶ 30% age <12 years, 6% >65 years
- ▶ 45% Hispanic, 52% African-American
- ▶ 96% <200% poverty level
- ▶ 33% uninsured, 50% Medicaid

Case Study

- ▶ Six children, aged 12, 11, 10, 9, 5, and 1 came into the custody of their biological grandmother, “Gramma T”. None had vaccine records, but the grandmother was sure that each child was up-to-date.
 - § Some children’s records might be obtainable through the school
 - § Another’s records might be obtainable at another doctor’s office
 - § Another’s records might be obtainable by our own charts from three years ago
 - § All the children had been receiving state services at some time
- ▶ Gramma T was willing to start each of the children over with vaccinations, if necessary
- ▶ No vaccines were given to any of these children at the first visit

Observations

- ▶ Inadequate records may prevent timely immunizations
- ▶ Frequently, children's records are scattered
- ▶ Families are willing to catch up on any missed vaccines

Groups that have vaccine records

- ▶ Families
- ▶ Doctor's offices
- ▶ Schools
- ▶ Head Start/Early Head Start--COPA
- ▶ Daycare/Preschool
- ▶ Department of Human Services--Cornerstone
 - § WIC offices
 - § Early Intervention
 - § Family Case Management
 - § Healthy Families Illinois
- ▶ Department of Children and Family Services--HealthWorks
- ▶ Illinois HealthConnect (Primary Care Case Management)
- ▶ Department of Healthcare and Family Services (Public Aid)

Other Considerations

- ▶ Few offices will commit any resources to entering or retrieving vaccine data from another database
- ▶ Vaccine data from doctors' offices is available through billing records
- ▶ Doctor's offices are gradually adopting electronic health records

First Conclusion

- ▶ Existing databases must communicate with each other, particularly with medical offices

Patient Acceptance of Vaccination

- ▶ Few concerns about side effects
- ▶ Few concerns about new vaccines
- ▶ Few concerns about number of injections
- ▶ Few concerns about long-term effects, such as autism
- ▶ Nearly all will accept extra vaccinations in order to gain acceptance into other programs, such as school or daycare

Vaccines as Markers for Access

- ▶ Internal and external quality data at CFHC demonstrates high vaccine coverage for our patients
- ▶ Generally, children who need catch-up vaccinations are new to our practice
- ▶ Population groups that are behind in vaccines are also behind in general health care
 - § Immigrants
 - § Uninsured
 - § Changes in insurance or public aid
 - § Homeless
 - § DCFS custody

Two Major Points

- ▶ Access to vaccine services is the same as access to general primary health care services.
- ▶ Electronic exchange and availability of vaccine data is crucial to the success of any efforts to achieve 100% coverage.