THE COMMUNITY PHARMACY: CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVING VACCINATION RATES

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CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

• Challenges
  – (Lack of) insurance coverage for pharmacy-based immunizations
  – Provider and patient awareness
  – Vaccine hesitancy

• Opportunities
  – Pharmacists’ scope of practice
  – Accessibility / trust / relationships with patients
Challenge #1: Inconsistent Insurance Coverage

• The Affordable Care Act requires insurers to cover routine immunizations...

  ...BUT Insurers are able to choose whether to include this as a pharmacy benefit vs. medical benefit
CHALLENGE #2: PROVIDER & PATIENT AWARENESS OF...

- Pharmacists’ scope of practice (both)
- Process of referring patients to receive vaccines in pharmacies (providers)
- Process of receiving vaccines in pharmacies (patients)
- How to find a pharmacy that stocks/can order a needed vaccine (both)
Pharmacists face many of the same issues as other types of providers.
OPPORTUNITY #1: PHARMACISTS’ SCOPE OF PRACTICE

- Pharmacists in all 50 states and DC can administer some or all vaccines

- >300,000 immunizing pharmacists/student pharmacists trained in the U.S. during the last ~22 years
  - Represents a large majority of currently practicing pharmacists

American Pharmacists Association, unpublished data (2017)
OPPORTUNITY #1: PHARMACISTS’ SCOPE OF PRACTICE

• California SB 493 (signed Oct. 2013) – expanded pharmacists’ scope of practice to include authority to furnish and administer routine vaccines to individuals over age 3 years

*Note, pharmacists’ scope of practice also applies to interns (students) with appropriate training and supervision
OPPORTUNITY #1: PHARMACISTS’ SCOPE OF PRACTICE

• California Business & Professions Code Chapter 9, Division 2, §4052.8 requirements
  – Maintain BLS certification
  – Comply with all ACIP (CDC) recommendations
  – Provide documentation to patient’s PCP and CAIR (+ other record-keeping requirements)
  – Complete a CDC- or Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education-endorsed training program that includes hands-on technique demonstration
OPPORTUNITY #2: PHARMACISTS’ ACCESSIBILITY

• Pharmacists are consistently identified as:
  – The most accessible healthcare providers
    • >90% of American’s live within 5 miles of a pharmacy
  – The second-most trusted healthcare providers

• Most pharmacies can order most vaccines for next-day delivery

APHA (2006); Calis (2004); Gallup (2015)
1. About 25% of adult influenza vaccines are administered in a pharmacy. (Srivastav, et al., 2016)

2. Geographic areas with higher pharmacist density have higher influenza vaccination rates. (Gai and Feng, 2003)

3. Pharmacy-based immunization availability improves access and convenience, especially for young, healthy, working adults (Goad, et al., 2013) and underserved communities. (Murphy et al, 2003; Crawford, et al., 2011)

4. Pharmacists in the ambulatory care setting can help reduce vaccine errors and missed opportunities to vaccinate. (Haas-Gehres, et al., 2003)
Overall, pharmacists are a source of immunization education, recommendation and administration

But…

…Vaccination rates remain below Healthy People 2020 goals, and we need to continue to collaborate with everyone in the “immunization neighborhood”
What questions do you have?

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REFERENCES


