



State of Wisconsin  
**Department of Health Services**

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Tony Evers, Governor  
Karen Timberlake, Secretary

August 4, 2022

Michael Queensland  
Senate Chief Clerk  
Room B20 Southeast, State Capitol  
Madison, Wisconsin 53701

Edward Blazel  
Assembly Chief Clerk  
17 West Main Street, Room 401  
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Mr. Queensland and Mr. Blazel:

I am pleased to submit to the Legislature the enclosed report as required by Wis. Stat. § 252.04(11) on the success of the statewide immunization program. The report includes updates on: school immunization rates; pre-school age children immunization estimates; adolescent immunization estimates; vaccine preventable disease response including COVID-19; and updates on the Wisconsin Immunization Registry.

As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karen E. Timberlake".

Karen E. Timberlake  
Secretary-designee

Enclosure



**Report on the Success of the Statewide Immunization Program during CY 2021**  
Department of Health Services

Wisconsin Statute § 252.04(11) directs the Department of Health Services to submit an annual report to the Legislature on the success of the statewide immunization program.

**School Immunization Rates**

DHS 144 requires students to receive a minimum number of immunizations, be in the process of receiving those immunizations, or have a signed waiver in order to attend school and be in compliance with the law. Every fall, schools are required to report the aggregate number of students who have met the minimum immunization requirements, are in the process of meeting the requirements, are behind schedule, have a waiver, or have no immunization record or waiver on file.

For the 2021–2022 school year, 2,606 schools reported information on 890,055 students (3.3% more schools reported as compared to the previous year).

- During the 2021–2022 school year, 88.6% of students met the minimum immunization requirements, a 3.3% decrease from 91.9% the previous year.
- The percentage of students with a waiver (personal conviction, religious, or medical) for one or more immunizations increased from 1.6% during the 1997–1998 school year to 4.6% during the 2021–2022 school year.
- The percentages of students with religious and medical waivers have remained relatively constant, but the percentage of students with a personal conviction waiver increased from 1.2% during the 1997–1998 school year to 4.5% during 2021–2022.
- During the 2021–2022 school year, 3.2% of students were behind schedule, compared to 2.9% the previous year.
- Only 1.2% of students had waived all immunizations during the 2021–2022 school year, compared to 1.0% last school year.

**Preschool-Age Children Immunization Estimates**

Estimates of immunization levels among Wisconsin preschool-age children (24 months of age) are determined using the Wisconsin Immunization Registry (WIR). A child's primary immunization series includes: 4 DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis); 3 polio; 1 MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella);  $\geq 3$  *Haemophilus influenzae* Type B; 3 hepatitis B; 1 varicella; and 4 pneumococcal conjugate vaccine doses.

The percentage of preschool-age children who completed the primary series for 2021 was 68.9%, compared to 69.9% during 2020.

## **Adolescent Immunization Estimates**

CY21 immunization activities also included those specific to adolescents aged 13 through 18 years. The adolescent vaccine platform includes HPV (human papilloma virus), MCV4 (meningococcal), and Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis).

The following represent coverage rates for adolescents using WIR data:

- $\geq 1$  HPV (60.4%) compared to 60.0% during the previous year, HPV Complete\* (48.4%) compared to 47.3% during the previous year
- $\geq 1$  MCV4 (71.9%) compared to 72.6% during the previous year, MCV4 up to date\*\* (47.1%) compared to 47.1% during the previous year
- $\geq 1$  Tdap (77.0%) compared to 78.1% during the previous year
- $\geq 1$  MenB (19.4%)\*

\*HPV Complete: Represents either a two or three-dose series depending on age at vaccine series initiation.

\*\*MCV4 up to date: Includes only clients 17-18 years old. Clients are considered up to date (UTD) if they have received a meningococcal ACWY dose prior to age 16 years and a booster dose at or after 16 years or if they received one meningococcal ACWY dose at or after age 16 years.

\*\*\*MenB rates have not been reported previously in the annual report to the Legislature.

## **Vaccine Preventable Disease Response**

### *COVID-19*

In 2021, COVID-19 vaccination efforts increased with vaccine continuing to be supplied to Wisconsin by the federal government. A network of over 2,400 providers, including local and tribal health departments, pharmacies, primary care and specialty medical providers, mass vaccinators and state directed resources (e.g., Wisconsin National Guard and a state contracted vendor) have provided access to vaccination throughout Wisconsin. Since the beginning of vaccination efforts when vaccine became available in late 2020, over 10 million doses have been administered to date to individuals in Wisconsin.

### *Influenza*

Overall, the percentage of Wisconsin residents receiving influenza immunization was 40% for the 2021-22 season. Vaccination rates decreased across all age groups when compared to last influenza season. Influenza disease and hospitalization rates were slightly higher than the previous season yet atypically low, likely as a result of COVID-19 mitigation measures.

### *Measles*

Approximately 12,600 Afghan guests, almost half of them children, were housed at Fort McCoy Army Base from August 2021 through early spring 2022. Monroe County Public Health, in collaboration with the Wisconsin National Guard, provided vaccinations for COVID-19, MMR, polio, varicella, and hepatitis B. Surveillance data for the control of vaccine preventable diseases was closely monitored and tracked. Regular meetings were held with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Fort McCoy Public Health, Monroe County Public Health, WI Division of Public Health, and the Wisconsin State Lab of Hygiene to ensure coordination and collaboration of efforts.

## **Administrative Rules**

Proposed updates to DHS 144, which relates to the minimum immunization requirements for entry into Wisconsin schools and child care centers, were submitted to the legislature in 2019; the proposed modifications to DHS 144 sought to bring Wisconsin school immunization requirements in line with surrounding Midwestern states and guidance from the CDC. Several portions of the proposed rule were objected to by the Assembly Committee on Constitution and Ethics in the legislature in early 2020. On May 5, 2020, the Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Review (JCRAR) concurred in the committee's objections to the proposed rule. JCRAR then introduced 2021 AB 12 and 2021 SB 35 to prohibit promulgation of those portions of the rule. Both of JCRAR's bills failed to pass, pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution 1.

### **Wisconsin Immunization Registry**

The Wisconsin Immunization Registry, also called WIR, is an internet database that tracks vaccine records for Wisconsin children and adults. It helps providers track patients who visit multiple clinics, forecasts what immunizations a patient needs, and can run reports that measure a clinic's vaccine rates. It also allows patients, parents, and child guardians to view their vaccine record and keep track of their vaccines.

- **Number of records:** WIR contains more than 10.2 million client records with 130 million associated immunizations in the system. Each day, approximately 37,826 vaccine administration records are added to WIR.
- **Active users:** WIR currently has 21,899 active users. This number includes 2,787 schools and school districts, all of which can enter data into WIR. The count of active users does not include those who enter the system through an electronic health record (EHR) or electronic medical record (EMR) with a real-time interface with WIR.
- **Utilization:** There was an average of 179,420 instances per month of individuals accessing their (or their children's) immunization record during 2021, which is a 181.9% increase from the 2020 monthly average (63,648 instances). There was a peak of 275,881 instances per month of individuals accessing their (or their children's) immunization record during August 2021.
- **State collaborations on system upgrades:** Sharing of code to upgrade state immunization registries has benefited multiple states using the WIR platform.
- **Improvements to the WIR:** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of changes to the WIR were completed, including updates to the vaccine schedule, reporting functionality and the ordering module to accommodate COVID-19 vaccine. Additionally, the mass vaccination module was updated to include race and ethnicity.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic response, the WIR saw a significant increase in usage. Over 2,500 immunizers registered as COVID-19 providers since 2020; all were required to report doses to the WIR within 24 hours of administration. At the peak, 95,984 doses were administered in a single day (April 8, 2021). As of December 31, 2021, over 8.8 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine had been administered and reported to the WIR.