



**2022 MIAP Conference Award  
Pediatric Immunization Quality Team  
Caring Health Center  
Springfield, Massachusetts**



Each year, the Massachusetts Immunization Action Partnership (MIAP) recognizes individuals or groups that have made an outstanding contribution to pediatric immunizations in Massachusetts. The recipient of this award is an individual or an organization that has demonstrated particular leadership, initiative, innovation, collaboration and/or advocacy.

The Massachusetts Immunization Action Partnership is delighted to recognize the 2022 MIAP Conference Awardee, the Pediatric Immunization Quality Team of Caring Health Center in Springfield. Team members include Jessica Antonmarchi, Lorna Issac, Andrea Malcolm, Alyssa Manuel, Siobhan McNally, Anfernee Morales, Natasha Rodriguez, Delia Salgado, and Dawn Wright.

The Caring Health Center, CHC, a federally qualified health center, works with vulnerable populations in Hampden County, such as the uninsured, immigrants and refugees. CHC uses a variety of strategies to improve immunization coverage for all their patients.

The Pediatric Immunization Quality Team meets bi-weekly to review immunization rates and discuss strategies to improve these rates. A Pediatric Tracking Coordinator reaches out to overdue patients and schedules them for an appointment. CHC has recently started to offer transportation to all patients with the hope of decreasing patient “no-shows.”

CHC embarked on an Immunization Quality Improvement Program (IQIP) initiative earlier in 2022. The IQIP led the Quality Team to look more closely at two strategies for improving pediatric coverage rates: scheduling the next immunization visit before the patient leaves the office and strengthening vaccine communication.

As a result of this IQIP, to increase scheduling the next vaccination visit prior to leaving the office:

- CHC trains all medical assistants to schedule the next vaccination visit before the patient leaves the office.
- To assist with catch-up of pediatric patients and COVID vaccination, the Team reviewed their patient schedule, which led to the addition of vaccination-only slots in the early evening and on Saturdays.
- CHC staff use Standing Orders to vaccinate when needed, to ensure that an opportunity to vaccinate is not missed.

CHC also has strengthened its vaccine communication by increasing its community presence online and in-person. Some examples of their efforts include a significant social media presence focused on immunization clinic availability, and staff attending the local Farmer’s Market in Springfield’s Forest Park.

At a recent IQIP check-in, it was noted that Childhood and Adolescent Coverage Rates had increased across the board. Significant among this data was a 15% increase in MMR vaccination and an 8% increase HPV vaccination in females.

The Quality Team believes that patients are taking advantage of free transportation to appointments. Families have reported to CHC staff it is much more convenient to attend a Saturday immunization clinic or one of the late-day vaccine-only appointments. CHC is looking at ways they can designate more evening appointments in the future to help even more working families.

Because of feedback from the IQIP strengthening vaccine communication strategy, the Quality Team engaged the CHC marketing team to work on increasing vaccine education in the exam rooms. Once the pandemic hit, many educational resources were removed from exam and waiting rooms. The CHC marketing team is working on incorporating new and existing vaccine education resources in the pediatric exam and waiting rooms. Patients will now also receive a summary of immunizations for which they are due on the after-visit summary.

CHC is committed to increasing immunization coverage across the board. All nurses and clinical staff have been briefed on the Saturday vaccine clinics and new immunization only appointments in the early evening. The members of the Pediatric Quality Immunization Team would like to acknowledge their work would not have been possible without the support and contributions of many other Caring Health Center staff members.

The Caring Health Center staff are truly Immunization Champions who, through their dedication, innovation, and focus on equity, embody the spirit of the MIAP Conference Award. Congratulations to the Caring Health Center Pediatric Immunization Quality Improvement Team. Congratulations to the Pediatric Immunization Quality Team of Caring Health Center!