

HPV Vaccination and Cancer

The HPV vaccine is cancer prevention. It helps prevent infection by high risk types of human papillomavirus, or HPV, that cause the majority of cervical, vaginal, vulvar, anal, penile, and throat cancers. **The vaccine is best when given before age 13** to achieve the most complete coverage against cancer-causing strains of HPV. That's why the American Cancer Society recommends that boys and girls get the HPV vaccine at age 11 or 12.

While more than half of boys and girls in the U.S. get at least the first dose of HPV vaccine, **too many are not vaccinated and are missing the protection against cancer it could provide.**

In 2014, the President's Cancer Panel released a report calling "underuse of HPV vaccines a serious but correctable threat to progress against cancer."

Project Overview

The **HPV VACs** (Vaccinate Adolescents against Cancers) **Program** is a signature mission priority program of the American Cancer Society that seeks to increase HPV vaccination rates for adolescents across the nation. Since 2015, over 250 Cancer Control staff have engaged key stakeholders as conveners, connectors, and change-makers to prioritize HPV vaccination. Supported in part through a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the VACs program engages health systems, payors, and federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) to increase HPV vaccination through clinic level interventions and quality improvement efforts to improve system-wide processes and educate providers that the HPV vaccine is cancer prevention. Additionally, we partner with state health departments and other state-based entities to facilitate system changes that increase the availability and utilization of the HPV vaccine.



What We Do

Clinician Outreach and Training

- Lead clinic-level quality improvement interventions and provide technical assistance to partners through our cancer control staff.
- Provide in-person and web-based trainings to primary care practices and state-based partners through our cancer control staff who serve as coaches around HPV vaccination efforts.
- Partner with state health systems staff to increase HPV prioritization efforts with state comprehensive cancer control programs, immunizations coalitions, public/private insurers, and other key stakeholders.

Disseminate Education Materials

- Disseminate ACS, CDC, and other evidence-based educational materials to clinic-level partners, state-level constituents and parents.
- Partner with Comprehensive Cancer Control Programs/Coalitions, public and private health care plans, and academic partners to increase provider awareness of existing CDC materials and resources.

What ACS Brings to HPV Vaccination Efforts

Established in 1913, ACS's mission is to save lives, celebrate lives, and lead the fight for a world without cancer.

Our structure includes a central corporate office in Atlanta, Georgia, as well as regional and local offices supporting 6 geographic Regions, with more than 250 local offices. With nearly 2 million volunteers and approximately 4,500 community-based staff, we are one of the most trusted sources for cancer information in the U.S.

Our Cancer Control Department supports the delivery of evidence-based quality improvement interventions to improve HPV vaccination rates that have been tested over the last three years. Our clinic-level interventions have **helped partners increase HPV vaccination initiation by 15 percentage points.**

We also provide professional development and training on HPV vaccination as cancer prevention and implementing interventions that work. Our tools and approaches can help clinic-level partners improve both their system-wide processes and their vaccination outcomes.

Increase and Form Strong Partnerships

- Coordinate with CDC and other key state-level organizations to increase state and local coordination on HPV vaccination initiatives.
- Provide cancer-specific content, speakers, and medical expertise to partner health professional and immunization organizations.

Push Prioritization of HPV Vaccination Efforts

- Provide presentations and strategic leadership through Comprehensive Cancer Control Coalitions, state Primary Care Associations, and other key networks to highlight HPV vaccination information, intervention strategies, and resources.
- Coordinate with ACS' Cancer Advocacy Network (CAN) to identify HPV vaccination education and advocacy efforts to increase the priority of HPV vaccination at the national and state level.

Results

- Demonstrated practice change through implementation of evidence-based quality improvement interventions in FQHC project sites. **Example: In over 100 clinics, through the VACs pilot, 100% of pilot sites implemented standing orders.**
- Increased HPV vaccination rates for FQHC systems engaged in quality improvement intervention projects. **Example: Our pilot projects sustained increased initiation rates of 15%.**
- Increased education and technical support for key local and state organizations using CDC materials, resources, and ACS developed tools useful for increasing HPV vaccination. **Example: Materials such as the [STEPS guide](#) continued to be utilized to inform HPV vaccination primary care interventions.**
- Increased number of states, regions, and organizations that identify increased HPV vaccination rates as a public health goal. **Example: Over 60% of ACS state managers serve in statewide leadership roles in HPV vaccination efforts continuing to push prioritization.**

How Do I Find Out More? ACS.HPV.VACs@cancer.org

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This project is supported in part by CDC Cooperative Agreement Number 5H23IP000953-02. ©2018, American Cancer Society, Inc. cancer.org | **1.800.227.2345**

