



Dear Colleague:

The Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic is one of the most challenging public health events we have faced in recent history. As the nation's leading health protection agency, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) remains steadfast in our commitment to work closely with state, tribal, local, and territorial partners, as well as other public health partners, to reduce the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and respond aggressively to this public health threat.

Preparing for implementation of COVID-19 vaccines is a critical next step in our efforts to protect the public and reduce the impact of the pandemic on society. However, COVID-19 is not the only health threat in our midst. While signs of recovery from pandemic-related disruptions to routine childhood vaccination have recently been observed, children and communities remain at risk for preventable disease and outbreaks. Additionally, with the influenza season fast approaching, protecting vulnerable populations and reducing burdens on the healthcare system through influenza vaccination will be especially important.

We are asking for your help in protecting our communities:

- As we work to develop operational guidance for COVID-19 vaccine implementation, review your vaccination protocols to identify strengths, gaps, and potential strategies for COVID-19 vaccination, especially for at-risk and vulnerable populations (e.g., racial and ethnic minority groups and difficult to reach populations such as persons experiencing homelessness).
- Read and share the newly issued [Interim Guidance for Immunization Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) which includes information on the importance of routine vaccination across the lifespan, the safe delivery of vaccination services in a variety of clinical settings, and strategies for catch-up vaccination.
- Visit our [Resources for Encouraging Vaccinations During COVID-19 Pandemic](#) where we have a series of resources, including key messages, social media posts, and a web feature, *Well-Child Visits are Essential*. Consider using these materials in educational outreach to parents via your social media channels, newsletters, or website.
- Help support parents' vaccine decisions through sharing resources from our [Vaccinate with Confidence](#) framework, including resources on [effective vaccine conversations](#) and [creating a culture of immunization in the practice](#).
- Share information on the [Vaccines for Children program](#) to help families who have recently lost insurance or are experiencing economic hardship in accessing vaccines at no cost.
- Review updated [influenza vaccine recommendations](#) as they become available and identify strategies to improve influenza vaccination coverage, especially among those at [high risk for influenza complications](#) in order to reduce the overall burden of respiratory

illnesses and protect vulnerable populations and the healthcare system during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During these unprecedented times, partnerships between public health, healthcare providers, community organizations, other partners, and the public are especially critical. We appreciate the vital role you play in protecting our communities through vaccination. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Redfield, MD
Director, CDC

Nancy Messonnier, MD
Director, National Center for Immunization
and Respiratory Diseases CDC