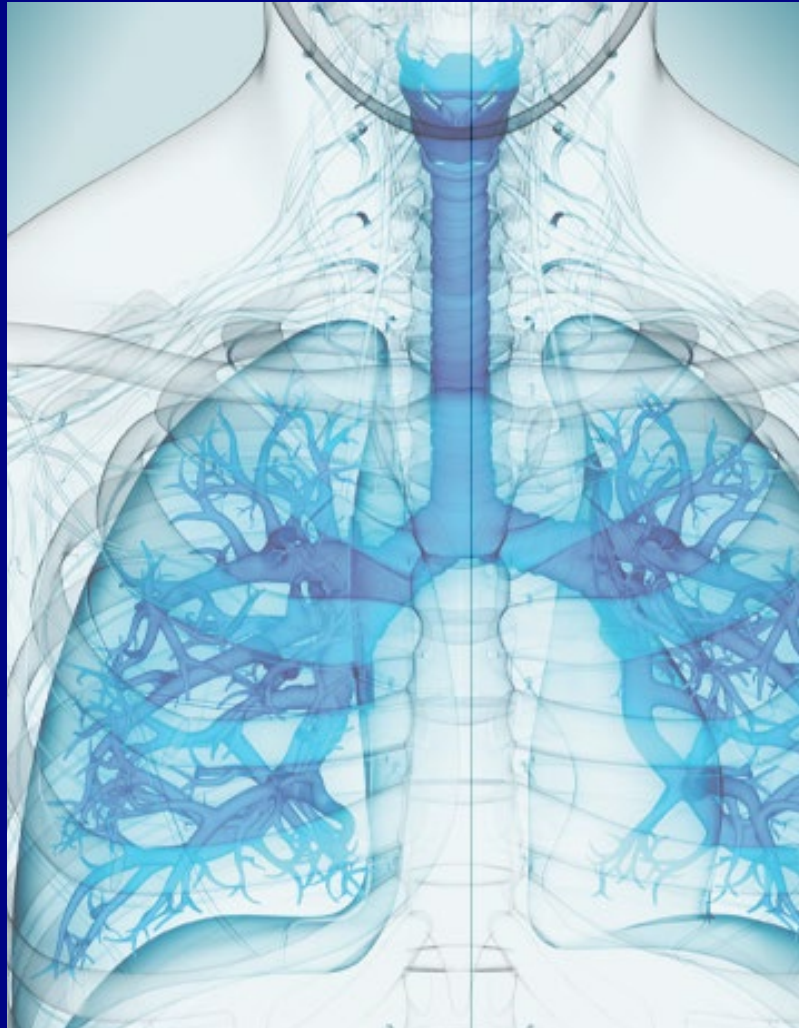


Key Considerations for Successful Implementation of Vaccination Programs to Help Protect Against Respiratory Diseases in the Long-term Care (LTC) Setting

A Guide for LTC HCPs and Other Decision Makers



Residents in LTC settings are at elevated risk for several respiratory diseases including influenza, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), pneumococcal pneumonia, and COVID-19. HCPs and other decision makers in these locations should consider how to help protect residents against these diseases with a comprehensive vaccination program. This guide is meant to generate discussion and to provide insights and actionable ideas for leaders to take back to their organization to help support the effectiveness of their existing vaccination processes and create a detailed plan for flu season.

Considerations for Effective Respiratory Disease Season Planning for Long-term Care

Population health decision makers at LTC organizations are responsible for setting expectations for clinicians and staff, establishing vaccination protocols and processes, managing staff education, identifying vaccine champions, and ensuring overall vaccination efficiency within their organization.¹

Review the following questions to consider your organization's readiness for flu season vaccination and ensure an appropriate plan is in place.



Vaccination Prioritization and Flu/Respiratory Disease Season Planning

- Is your organization's plan for vaccination against respiratory diseases for this upcoming flu season up to date, complete, and has it been shared with the appropriate staff and HCPs?¹ If the plan needs to be revisited, how can you support timely completion?
- Has your organization appropriately prioritized vaccination against respiratory diseases compared with other vaccine-preventable adult diseases?¹
- How does your organization's vaccination plan prioritize vaccinations beyond just flu? Are you ready to activate vaccinations for RSV, pneumococcal pneumonia, and COVID-19?
- What is average length of stay for patients in your facility? How do you consider length of stay in your planning process, and to what extent do you prioritize vaccination to help prevent future outbreaks when relevant during disease season?
- Who are the staff and HCPs in your organization who will need to work together to create the vaccination plan, and are they fully prepared to do so? Are those stakeholders also prepared to prioritize patients and advocate for vaccination as part of your patients' overall care plan?¹
- Are there barriers that may impact the organization's ability to successfully plan for and vaccinate eligible residents this respiratory disease season?



Identification of Patients At Risk for Respiratory Diseases

- Does the organization have a clearly defined process to identify patients who are eligible for respiratory disease vaccination?
- At what point do you address vaccination status with your patients, and how are these data captured in the patient's medical record?¹ Do you have a protocol to ensure patients receive all the needed seasonal vaccinations? How do you capture patient consent(s)?
- How does the organization manage patient vaccination data? What relevant vaccination data sources need to be coordinated to keep timely patient-level documentation (ie, additional medical records, state registries, etc)?
- When and how are expectations about documentation of immunization status communicated to HCPs, staff, and pharmacists?



Coadministration and Patient Follow-up

- When planning vaccination clinics, does the organization factor in potential vaccine coadministration?
- Are there challenges vaccinating eligible patients with more than one recommended vaccine during the same visit? How do you address patient questions or concerns?
- Does the organization have a process to support follow-up appointments for patients who need additional vaccinations? Does that process prioritize individual follow-up? Are vaccinations grouped for certain days of the month, or based on some other type of schedule?

Considerations for Effective Respiratory Disease Season Planning for Long-term Care

Consultant pharmacists are often on the front line of patient vaccination and other treatments. They play a critical role in proactively identifying at-risk patients who are eligible for vaccination, making a strong recommendation for vaccination, and managing documentation and record-keeping.²

Review the following questions to consider your role in supporting an effective vaccination process in the LTC sites you serve.



Vaccination Prioritization and Flu/Respiratory Disease Season Planning

- What is your role in developing a plan for vaccination against respiratory diseases during flu season at the LTC sites you serve?²
- Are you partnering with pharmacy and organization leadership to inform the appropriate staff and other HCPs about the importance of an effective approach to vaccinating LTC residents?²
- Do you prioritize vaccination planning across the various respiratory diseases? Do you plan differently across RSV, influenza, COVID-19, and pneumococcal pneumonia?
- Are there barriers that may impact your ability to plan for and vaccinate your eligible residents this respiratory disease season?



Identification of Patients At Risk for Respiratory Diseases

- Is vaccination history part of your patient intake questionnaire, and is this data captured in the patient's electronic medical record (EMR)?² If no, have you considered advocating to include vaccination history as part of a patient's EMR?
- Do you proactively help identify patients and make recommendations for vaccination?²
- Do you have a process for identifying patients who are eligible for respiratory disease vaccination?



Coadministration and Patient Follow-up

- Is potential coadministration of respiratory vaccines part of your planning for LTC patients? How do you schedule and follow through with follow-up appointments for patients who need additional vaccinations?



Ensure Readiness for Respiratory Disease Season by Prioritizing Vaccination for All Eligible Residents



Proactively engage in purposeful conversations with your colleagues to ensure your organization has an up-to-date plan to vaccinate all eligible, at-risk patients against preventable respiratory diseases

An effective vaccination plan includes:



Appropriate prioritization of vaccination against respiratory diseases



An active process for identification of at-risk patients



Consider coadministration and patient follow-up so patients receive all vaccinations for which they are eligible

You can be a champion for vaccination to help protect at-risk patients in your LTC organization

References 1. American Society of Consultant Pharmacists and Alliance for Aging Research. A call to action: expand & ensure access to all vaccines for long-term care residents. A white paper. June 2023. <https://www.agingresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/ExpandEnsureAccessToAllVaccinesForLongTermCareResidentsAWhitePaper.pdf> Accessed June 28, 2024. 2. American Society of Health-System Pharmacists. ASHP guidelines on the pharmacist's role in immunization. *Am J Health-Syst Pharm*. 2003;60:1371-7.