

VCHIP VDH COVID-19 Q&A Chat March 23, 2022

Positive Child Cases

C: I think the majority of positive child cases are not being reported (at least among my patients) because they are testing positive on home antigen tests. We encourage them to report to health department - but I doubt this is happening. Wonder about the value of continuing to collect/report case counts.

C: Agree

C: Benjamin Lee, MD, UVM Children's Hospital & Larner COM Dept. of Pediatrics: Agree that case counts alone in the era of Omicron are increasingly less useful. I've been advised that VDH has internal data that suggests that the trends for home antigen test results mirror the official reports--total cases are being undercounted but the actual trajectory is not being obscured.

Vaccine Effectiveness for 5-12 Year Old Age Group and general thoughts on boosters

C: William Raszka, MD, UVM Medical Center Children's Hospital & Larner COM Department of Pediatrics: The data in vaccine effectiveness in young children is incredibly disappointing.

Q: Do we have a sense of what the actual current vaccine effectiveness is among age 5-12 yo group? My sense is very low in regards to having positive test results/symptomatic disease. Assuming it is helpful against significant morbidity/mortality.

A: William Raszka, MD, UVM Medical Center Children's Hospital & Larner COM Department of Pediatrics: The efficacy against infection was quite poor and fell from almost 70% to only 12% over six weeks. It also fell against hospitalization (although very low numbers) from 95% to 50%.

A: Benjamin Lee, MD, UVM Children's Hospital & Larner COM Dept. of Pediatrics: Effectiveness against infection is low in kids. Important to reiterate that protection against infection is not a reasonable expectation, in my mind it was never a reasonable expectation from the onset...

C: Thanks Bill and Ben for your input - that is what I have been assuming. Encouraging my families to test, test, test before seeing grandparents/vulnerable individuals for now. Not to assume the vaccine prevents infection/transmission in this age group.

C: William Raszka, MD, UVM Medical Center Children's Hospital & Larner COM Department of Pediatrics: My summary on vaccines: Nationally, immunization rates are flat and not expected to rise; 2) the second booster in adults is a mess as it is being pushed by the companies in the absence of strong data to support it. Whether BA2 will lead to a bump or a flattening of the curve is the key question right now as it has differed across many countries.

C: Monica Ogelby, Vermont Department of Health: VRBAC is meeting April 6th to talk about the future of Covid vaccines and has been very clear it will not be voting on any of the applications submitted for adult boosters...

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School Sickness Policy

C:

https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/SchoolSicknessPolicy_FINAL_March2022.pdf

Get Involved in All Things

C: Stephanie Winters, Vermont Medical Society: swinters@vtmd.org Go amazing team!!!!

Efforts to Address Mental Health Needs

Q: Is this replacing the Child Psychiatric Consultation Program through UVMMC? (maybe that doesn't exist anymore?)

A: Breena Holmes, MD, VCHIP (verbally): That's a great question. I wouldn't use the word replacing. Keep going with that now if you are using that. In the summer, that team of great child psychiatrists at Vermont Center for Children Youth and Families is going to support this access program instead as a pilot and using for at least a year to see if it meets the needs of primary care.

C: This is all so great. We use our one psychiatrist in the county like this all the time - so we do the prescribing but can curbside her. It's helpful. Second, in our experience having several counselors only take short term consults - limit of 6 sessions, really helps free up counseling options. We have one person in house and he just does SBIRT and I can't live without him. I think some of the patients in counseling really need to be tapered or graduated as their care plateaus, to make room for more acute needs. That's a bigger goal...

C: An additional effort to address mental health needs of Vermont's children is the efforts of Dr. Beth Forbes leading a team from our peds dept, child psychiatry, and psychology to develop a curriculum for MH education for our residents for current and future care!