

VCHIP CHAMP VDH COVID-19

January 6, 2021 | 12:15-12:45pm Call Questions and Answers*

Wendy Davis, MD, FAAP, Vermont Child Health Improvement Program, UVM
Breena Holmes, MD, FAAP, Physician Advisor, Maternal & Child Health, Vermont Department of Health (VDH), VCHIP Senior Faculty

VDH Updates - Testing

Breena Holmes, MD, VCHIP, VDH: I'm sure folks are aware that we are ramping up. We want more testing. Everyone wants more testing. The Governor in particular based on the post-holiday timeframe really wants to get a handle on what just happened in terms of our exposure. Get tested if you gathered.

VDH Health Operations Center Commendation – Dr. Rebecca Bell

Breena Holmes, MD, VCHIP, VDH: It was such a cool convergence of my worlds to have the communications team and public health acknowledge that if a really articulate pediatric ICU doctor speaks, we should amplify it. I felt just really proud to know Becca. There were a lot of comments in the chat in the VDH Health Operations Center saying "Can I have a copy of that? Please send the link" because this is exactly the kind of messaging we need.

National AAP Updates

Breena Holmes, MD, VCHIP, VDH: I haven't seen the Revised COVID-19 interim guidance *Safe Schools and Supporting the Emotional and Behavioral Health Needs of Children/Adolescents/Families* be released by the National AAP yet. I fear that it didn't make it out yet because I have been watching for it and didn't see it. I did review it. I love my AAP school colleagues, though it's not all that groundbreaking. I'm not sure we're going to find anything to pluck from it, but it's still good to see the attention on schools.

Questions/Discussion

Q: For nursing moms who receive the vaccine, I have heard of a few studies looking at breast milk. Any specific studies or resources that we can share with this population? I have moms that want to donate milk to study. To clarify, looking for information about studies that are accepting milk to study of vaccinated mothers.

A: William Raszka, MD, UVMCH & Larner COM Dept. of Pediatrics: I am not familiar with data on vaccinated mothers and breast milk as they were not included in the initial studies.

A: Benjamin Lee, MD, UVMCH & Larner COM Dept. of Pediatrics: I am not aware of any studies that mothers can donate to, but I can ask around.

A: Michelle Shepard, MD, Pediatric Primary Care, UVM Medical Center (Williston) & VCHIP: Please tune into OB grand rounds. I welcome questions!

A: Melissa Kaufold, RN, UVM Health Network Home Health & Hospice; Family and Children's Program: Marj Meyers' OB grand rounds re: pregnancy/lactation and vaccination was on 12/22/20.

A: William Raszka, MD, UVM Medical Center Children's Hospital & Larner COM Department of Pediatrics: Anti- SARS-COV-2 antibodies can be found in breast milk.

A: Michelle Dorwart, MD, UVM Medical Center: There is a study, but they are at capacity due to high interest.

https://powellmilklab.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bDGO4eJakdy9ni5. Individuals who are interested are still welcome to fill out the survey at the link provided just in case.

*Note: This is a paraphrased synopsis of the call and is not a word-for-word transcription.

A: Leah Costello, MD, Timber Lane Pediatrics, South: Here is a link to a study, I think just questions, for moms who are breastfeeding and get the COVID vaccine. This is from the OB Dept. at the University of Washington, <https://redcap.iths.org/surveys/?s=87JFRCL8R8>.

C: FYI, F/U from Monday, my current understanding regarding current capacity at Essex Fairgrounds is 700/day (this information was shared in an email from Isabelle Desjardins Monday evening).

Q: Is there a standardized training that people administering the vaccine receive? I have seen some appalling vaccine techniques in the media. Shoulder joints getting injected, nurses towering over the patient instead of sitting at their level, etc.

A: Breena Holmes, MD, VCHIP, VDH: I'll defer to the folks on the phone. I don't know of any specific trainings through the current situation but our public health nurses have all in the past been a part of our immunization clinics and been trained. I think you may be noting just general nursing practice because the health department isn't doing any vaccinating that you're describing in Rutland. Maybe it's at the hospital level.

A: Wendy Davis, MD, VCHIP: In the media briefing yesterday there were quite a few questions in the Q&A portion about the media folks wanting to know a very refined level of detail plans for vaccination going forward. And the point was made several times there are many strategies including engaging different individuals including the medical reserve corps, a question was raised about the VT national guard the response always was these things are on the table because of the unpredictability of vaccine supply. We're holding these strategies but don't have them all looked at. I guess I would add I suspect there will be additional detail forthcoming.

A: Colleen Moran, MD, Appleseed Pediatrics: VDH EMS Vermont is working on training for EMTs to increase capacity to administer vaccines.

A: Indra Lovko MD, Community Health Centers of the Rutland Region: I think as nurses and pharmacists are being pulled in to handle the volume, they are inexperienced, so if they can get a refresher, even just an info sheet.

A: Sally Kerschner, RN, MSN, VDH: Lots of really bad immunization injection techniques are always in these media photos, especially nurses HCW not having hair pulled back from shoulders.

Q: Are there opportunities for healthcare professionals to volunteer to vaccinate?

A: Kate Goodwin, RN, CPNP, Lakeside Pediatrics: Yes, I'd like to help!

A: Patrick Duff, MD, UVM MC: Second this, I'm sure some of us residents would be willing to help as well.

A: Ellen Gnaedinger, APRN, South Royalton Health Center: UVM Nursing Dept. & other nursing school faculty in the state would likely be willing to help train EMT's/others on how to give injections. I'd be glad to help as well.

A: Kate Goodwin, RN, CPNP, Lakeside Pediatrics: I can also offer up, again, my pediatric nursing students. They'd be very keen to get the clinical experience of vaccine clinic.

A: Breena Holmes, MD, VCHIP, VDH: Thanks for all of these offers. I will bring them back to the planners!

A: Wendy Davis, MD, VCHIP: I will comment that the health department and state administration people are always quick to say they want to be careful about balancing that volunteer support and not pulling people from their regular job where they may be needed.

Q: Are there any guidelines for work up/referral for COVID patients with prolonged or chronic symptoms? Or any studies these patients can be enrolled in? Our walk-in is seeing a number of patients with these symptoms (headaches, severe fatigue and myalgia), most of whom had very mild case of COVID initially.

A: Wendy Davis, MD, VCHIP: I believe last week the commissioner said that's a group he's very interested in (I hope I'm not mixing up the population) that may be a group the VDH will engage in some study. Do you know?

A: Breena Holmes, MD, VCHIP, VDH: I don't know.

A: William Raszka, MD, UVMCH & Larner COM Dept. of Pediatrics: To the best of my knowledge, there is not yet a confirmed case definition of "long haulers". There is a keen interest in that group. I know of one phase II trial. <https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT04678830>

A: Elizabeth Hunt, MD, Timber Lane Pediatrics: A study of kids with prolonged symptoms would be great. Matt Hollander was seeing kids for r/o MIS-C but we are just following kids in primary care with interesting trajectories for now.

A: Benjamin Lee, MD, UVMCH & Larner COM Dept. of Pediatrics: I'm not sure there are any formalized guidelines or consensus approach at this time but certainly a topic that will require much work going forward.

Q: Any indication for parents/caregivers of children with perceived high risk conditions to be vaccinated? Lots of calls/questions from our parents (kids under 16).

A: Breena Holmes, MD, VCHIP, VDH: That has not been acknowledged as a subgroup yet, but many of us have discussed how two generational thinking is not always in the front of people's consciousness. We'll keep thinking that through together and Stephanie said it's just messy and ongoing, but we are aware of those issues.

A: William Raszka, MD, UVMCH & Larner COM Dept. of Pediatrics: I have not seen any indication for parents of high risk children.

Q: Stephanie, do you want to say anything about VMS call Thursday?

A: Stephanie Winters, Vermont Medical Society: Dr. Levine is unable to make the call so we are trying to do some updates on the vaccines and distribution in VT and where we are and any updates on that and any new science or lack thereof, on talking about half doses or doing one dose versus what was studied. Patrick is able to join us and hopefully Bill and Ben will be able to be on as well and collecting questions to pass on to the health department about vaccinating.

C: Sally Kerschner, RN, MSN, VDH: <https://rokeby.org/winter-season-book-group/>, Rokeby Museum in Ferrisburgh is holding a series of book discussion all relating to racism. First is Jan 19 with Stony the Road by Henry Louis Gates Jr.

C: Becca Bell, MD, UVM Medical Center: I think one thing to keep in mind is the mention of Chinese-Americans reporting lots of discrimination unfortunately. Something to keep in mind

C: Becca Bell, MD, UVM Medical Center: But Why? VPR podcast, "Hopes And Dreams for 2021 From Kids Around The World (1/1/21). It's just a great podcast and one we could all gather inspiration from.