

## VCHIP CHAMP VDH COVID-19

January 13, 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

### **K-12 School Cases**

*Breena Holmes, MD, VCHIP, VDH:* School cases are at roughly the same level as before Christmas. There are about seven (7) schools with cases per day. Thankfully, it is not reflecting the increase in the community, because we set our schools up so safely. I'm glad we haven't seen the same uptick as we have in the larger community.

### **COVID-19 Vaccine in Vermont**

*Wendy Davis, MD, VCHIP:* The chronic conditions subgroup was convened for when we get below the 64 year old age group for age bands. The CDC has their own defined list. Analysts at VDH have taken those conditions and figured out how many people are in those various groups within Vermont. Given current vaccine distribution in Vermont, it's fair to say we won't have enough for everybody immediately. The group is muddling through how to parse out these chronic conditions. Dr. Holmes raised the question of the great expertise among pediatricians and family physicians who vaccinate children and how we can help with this issue.

*Breena Holmes, MD, VCHIP, VDH:* There is no failed ship in how we talk about who is going to be vaccinated next. There is growing discontent that teachers and people who care for children are not being prioritized. We are trying all different ways to get this message through. The group is very concerned about implementation strategies and the whole idea of mass vaccinations, which gave me the chance to unmute as a pediatrician and point out what Lee Beers said yesterday. Surprisingly to me, the group just stopped and was thrilled with this observation. While the conversation about prioritization may be tricky, what if we start to think about how pediatricians, school nurses, and others in our community can be part of the planning for mass vaccinations? I then suggested that we use school communities as a venue for mass vaccinations, including vaccinating school communities as part of the process. This whole thing is a fast-moving train, so I really want people's thoughts on it. The VDH district offices are at the center of this discussion, as they should be. The National Guard has also been floated as a means for distributing mass vaccinations. Since you all volunteered to help with the effort, we offered up your expertise for the vaccine implementation process. Here is the full statement from AAP: <https://services.aap.org/en/news-room/news-releases/aap/2021/american-academy-of-pediatrics-urges-immediate-changes-in-distribution-of-covid-19-vaccine/>.

### **Questions/Discussion**

**Q: Do we have numbers (or percentages) of how many school children and staff who have been identified as close contacts at school who then had COVID positive tests? We are definitely testing more patients who have been determined to be close contacts at school, but thankfully their tests have been negative.**

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

**Q: Was 50% asymptomatic transmission specific for VT?**

*A: Wendy Davis, MD, VCHIP: We'll verify that and put a link in the email tonight.*

*A: Breena Holmes, MD, VCHIP, VDH: I believe it's in this week's data summary, <https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/COVID19-Weekly-Data-Summary-1-8-2021.pdf>. There is a slide that notes that 70% of cases in Vermont have symptoms.*

**Q: Do we know if there is a difference in the post 2nd dose reaction between Pfizer and Moderna?**

*A: Breena Holmes, MD, VCHIP, VDH: Not sure yet. We will try to find out.*

**Q: Is there any science behind the thought that those that are having a stronger reaction to the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine have had COVID-19 already?**

*A: Breena Holmes, MD, VCHIP, VDH: I don't know that. This is where we really miss input from Drs. Lee and Raszka. We are flying without our infectious disease experts today.*

*A: Wendy Davis, MD, VCHIP: I'm making a note of this and will try to see what we can find out.*

**Q: Is it safe to ride the gondola at a ski area?**

*A: Wendy Davis, MD, VCHIP: Given the question of the new variant coming into this country and perhaps easier transmit ability, bottom line is, and Drs. Lee and Raszka are both willing to come in on this, but both of them essentially said that despite some venting in gondolas, they probably wouldn't ride a gondola. I think the way it is set up is you may only ride with other individuals that are a part of your family unit. Otherwise, even in chairs that accommodate two to four people, people are riding singly. It's a big scale back for the ski areas and Drs. Lee and Raszka both felt that being outdoors in a chair was the best.*