

## VCHIP CHAMP VDH COVID-19

April 30, 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

### **Pilot Student Surveillance Testing**

*Breena Holmes, MD, VCHIP, VDH:* It is important that we talk about it in a neutral way, that it is another tool in the toolbox – masking, social distancing, and now voluntary student surveillance testing. Since kids can do their own anterior nares testing, we thought this was developmentally appropriate. Summer camps will also present voluntary testing challenges as well. There is CDC money flowing into the state to hire for staff to do the testing, so it will not be a burden on summer programs.

Here is some language to consider in student surveillance testing messaging: “We are piloting routine voluntary surveillance testing of students in our district ages 8-18. Our tools to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our school community include masking, distancing, and staying home when we are sick. Surveillance testing is another tool in the toolbox to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among our community and, like our teacher surveillance testing from earlier in the year, may lead to the detection of a few cases of students without symptoms.”

### **Questions/Discussion**

**Q: Melissa Kaufold, RN, UVMHN Home Health and Hospice: Anecdotally, my team at UVMHN Home Health is seeing greater uptake of COVID-19 vaccination in the New American parents whom we visit vs the other BIPOC or in non-BIPOC/non-New American parents. Families and we are experiencing tremendous support in this effort by AALV, where most of these parents are receiving their vaccines. Extremely fast progress in the last few weeks from deliberation during one visit to vaccinated (first vaccine so far) by the next visit. Dr. Bell, I passed along your “presumptive language” and other encouragement from yesterday’s VMS session to the rest of my team.**

*A: Becca Bell, MD, UVMHC: Thank you for the update and great news. I would love to hear more about successes and lessons learned here.*

*A: Melissa Kaufold, UVMHN Home Health and Hospice: Mainly AALV is where we turn in order to help with trusted community resource and staff who look like and are sometimes from the countries/cultures as our clients. So, just as we know, the more trustworthy providers are, the more they are trusted. And the larger the number of people we know who get vaccinated AND do not have problems, the more we are willing to pursue vaccination ourselves.*

*A: Becca Bell, MD, UVMHC: Wonderful, thank you. Another good example that folks need time, reassurance and personal recommendations.*

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

**Q: Guidance question here: VDH website states "people who have recovered from COVID-19 within the last 3 mos. do not need to test unless new symptoms." But we do not typically order tests for post-COVID within 3 mos. because it is presumed they will test positive? Any clarification is appreciated!**

*A: Benjamin Lee, UVMCH & LCOM Dept. of Pediatrics: If someone has new symptoms that could be consistent with COVID-19, that would need to be evaluated. The priority would be to see if there is an alternate diagnosis, but if not and thus COVID-19 cannot be ruled out, testing should be considered, with the caveat that a positive test could be positive from previous infection.*

**Q: Are vaccinations changing our approach to testing? Is there any new advice or this situation?**

*A: Breana Holmes, MD, VCHIP, VDH: We do still talk about testing vaccinated people who have symptoms consistent with COVID-19. I am hoping Dr. Lee will weigh-in.*

*A: Benjamin Lee, UVMCH & LCOM Dept. of Pediatrics: There is no change, if there are symptoms that could be consistent with COVID-19, testing should still be performed, because while the vaccines are terrific, there can and will be infrequent breakthrough infections.*

**C: In other good news, our office saw very few pts. this week who needed COVID-19 testing! May this happy trend continue.**

*A: Wendy Davis, VCHIP: Good news and reminds me to thank you and Timber Lane Pediatrics for organizing your testing so beautifully.*

**C: Becca Bell, MD, UVMCH: Here's a link to VPR Chanjo interview: <https://www.vpr.org/post/if-youre-safe-then-im-safe-singing-praises-COVID-vaccines-vts-african-community#stream/0>**