

## VCHIP CHAMP VDH COVID-19

May 10, 2021 | 12:15-12:45pm Call Questions and Answers\*

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### **Practice Issues: VDH Immunization Program Update, Chris Finley, APRN MPH, VDH Immunization Program Manager, and Merideth Plumpton**

*Chris Finley, APRN, MPH, VDH:* There have been many FQHCS enrolled to receive vaccines through the federal HRSA program, with some getting an allocation from the state and transferring over. They have all been invited to participate in the federal program. From the hospital-based umbrella PCPs, we have heard mixed responses ranging from “no, we don’t want our practices to do them” to “yes, we want practices to do them and have hospitals get out of the business of giving vaccines.” How do we get to talk to the providers and share some options? There may be a need for a hybrid model, where most practices are near the hospital, but some far away.

*Merideth Plumpton, RN, VDH:* We have seen a big drop-off in the number of people scheduling appointments, but there are several community partners across the board seeing an increase in walk-ins. We have on our web site a comprehensive list of sites offering walk-ins. People really want to make the decision to get vaccinated on the day.

### **Questions/Discussion**

**Re: Ellen Gnaedinger, APRN, South Royalton Health Center: School nurses I have spoken to in Sharon, Turnbridge, Rochester/Stockbridge & likely Chelsea, would be glad to help give vaccinations if VDH is going to do COVID vaccination clinics in schools. South Royalton Health Center, school clinic HealthHub, is ready to help.s**

*C: Stephanie Winters, Vermont Medical Society: We are connecting based on the survey. So, we will start this week! I do not think outreach necessarily needs to connect with school clinic locations but should coordinate.*

**Q: How about a joint letter from area pediatricians, school nurse, and superintendent?**

**Q: Do you know if those school nurses are enrolled in MRC?**

*A: Ellen Gnaedinger, APRN, South Royalton Health Center: Jill Lloyd, APRN, in Sharon is part of MRC. I am not sure about others, likely not.*

**Q: If approved on 5/12, do you anticipate the VDH website, and the pharmacy websites will be ready to process the appointments for 12–15-year-olds on 5/13?**

*A: Breena Holmes: the goal is yes – the pharmacies should be ready to do so immediately; it may take a day or so longer for VDH registration.*

**Q: Is the vaccine the same dosage for 12-year-olds vs adults? Are families just able to sign up wherever Pfizer is offered? There is nothing special families need to "look for" for their 12–15-year-olds?**

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

*A: Merideth Plumpton, RN, VDH: Yes, they can sign up for any Pfizer clinic. If they use the state registration system, it will filter to only show Pfizer based on DOB.*

*A: Will: To the best of my knowledge, the dose is the same. My impression is that they may modify the dose for the youngest children, e.g., six months to two.*

**C: Elizabeth Hunt, MD, Timber Lane Pediatrics: Parent concerns mainly coming from parents who were concerned for themselves, i.e., naturally vaccine hesitant. Parents have told me they are "worried" about the dosing and that it will be "too strong" for a child's body to handle. I would say largely families are excited.**

**C: Susan Sykas DNP, Appleseed Pediatrics: I, too, have families worried about dose for children, especially if parent had significant reaction to the immunization, they do not want to put their child through the same. More resistance than I anticipated!**

*A: Ashley Miller, MD, South Royalton Health Center: I would remind families that the flu vaccine is the same dose.*

*A: Benjamin Lee, MD, UVMCH & Larner COM Dept. of Pediatrics: They are doing additional dose-ranging I believe for kids <12, but above the doses I believe are the same.*

*A: Chris Finley, APRN, MPH, VDH: The Moderna dose is the same as adults for 12-15. The Moderna study of 6 months to 12 will test 25, 50 and 100ug.*

**C: I have found that many that are resistant are not informed about what an mRNA vaccine is. I heard a lecture recently that found that when all social media misinformation was reviewed that they found out that it came from only 12 different sources. I would love to volunteer to help getting the word out or vaccinate our kids. My 12 yr old son is also willing to be one of the first to get vaccinated and to do it with a picture/video, etc.**

**C: My 12-year-old daughter would also be very excited to help promote vaccinations for her age group in any way that would be helpful. (Videos, TV spots, etc.). She stated she thinks she is one of the most excited 12-year-olds to be able to be vaccinated!**

**C: Leah Costello, MD, Timber Lane Pediatrics, South: I put something on the vaccine for this age group on Timber Lane Pediatrics Facebook and Instagram account this morning. If anyone else wants to borrow it, I am happy to share the text!**

**C: Susan Sykas DNP, Appleseed Pediatrics: I keep asking the parents if they are immunizing and had one tell me, "no, it's just another flu." We had a discussion on the difference in mortality rates and this parent continued to refuse the need for it. We need to get the message out that the more we immunize, the sooner we'll eliminate this and protect all.**

**Q: I have had three parents that have expressed hesitancy because they have heard their male children will be infertile s/p SARS-Cov2 vaccination. This must be common misinformation on-line. Have people heard of this?**

*A: Cathy Kelley, LICSW, UVM Medical Center: I have heard concerns in the Somali Bantu community about the vaccine causing infertility.*

*A: Merideth Plumpton, RN, VDH: We have heard several comments from people concerned about infertility as well. There is no merit to those fears. We are looking for information that we can share publicly.*

*A: Cathy Kelley, LICSW, UVM Medical Center: I was very relieved when one of the moms who shared this concern told me that she went ahead and got the vaccine anyway. I asked her to spread the word that this has no merit!*

*A: Breena: I hadn't heard concerns about male infertility but had heard concerns about this in young women. Marj Meyer (UVM MC Maternal Fetal Medicine) put this issue to rest on the VMS Call last Thursday (5/6/21) – no evidence to support these concerns.*

*A: Merideth Plumpton, RN, VDH: I have not heard the male infertility issue at all.*

*A: Will: The male issue is based on a "report" of DNA sperm fragmentation index in the immediate 30 days after vaccination.*

*A: Alicia Jean Veit, MD, Timber Lane Pediatrics: Found this: As soon as the vaccines were approved in the US, the CDC launched a complementary study examining the impact of vaccination on sperm concentration and motility (movement). The study, which should wrap up in June 2021, aims to provide an evidence base for the effects of COVID-19 vaccination on semen parameters, and to determine how long these possible changes may last following vaccination.*

*A: Chris Finley, APRN, MPH, VDH: Do you have the reference from Marj Meyer?*

**Q: Will VDH publish a list of pharmacies giving Pfizer?**

*A: Merideth Plumpton, RN, VDH: The pharmacies are ordering a federal allocation and it can change from store-to-store Kathy. We can try and get a list.*

*A: Kathleen Geagan, MD, Mt. Ascutney Hospital and Health Center: I heard on NPR that the federal government is really encouraging 12–15-year-olds to get it from "thousands of pharmacies", but to do that, families need to know if their local pharmacy (or which ones) have the Pfizer vaccine.*

*A: Chris Finley, APRN, MPH, VDH: Pfizer is now available at all Kinney's.*

**Q: I missed the info re: approving Moderna for 12-15? That would be a potential game-changer in terms of safe storage!**

*A: Merideth Plumpton, RN, VDH: I read last week that Moderna was close to filing for EUA for 12–15-year-olds. I have not heard a specific date yet.*