



Inside Population Health Stay Well



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Welcome to *Inside Population Health*. For most kids, parents, and pediatricians, August means it's back-to-school time. This includes completing the required physical forms and immunizations. We are highlighting the importance of adolescent immunizations for HPV in our "Meet the Measures" section, as well as children's eye safety and the well-care visit further below.

In observance of International Overdose Awareness Day on August 31, our HCC coding tip is on substance use disorder and the pharmacy section covers the dangers of opioid overdoses. We also include information on our diabetes self-management program and vaccines for older adults.

As Chair of the SQCN Pediatric Primary Care Collaborative (PCPC), I use

the network measure guidelines to help our providers improve upon their office practices and most importantly, patient care. The PCPC brings together network pediatricians from different parts of the region to talk about these measures, best practices, and issues that we can problem solve together. One of the specific measures we are focusing on is immunizations for adolescents. This includes a committee project on the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine.

The HPV vaccine is recommended before the age of 13, when the immune response is better and before any sexual encounters. The dosing series can start at age 9 or 10 and is given in two doses. This is another advantage, as the HPV vaccine is given in three doses for those 15 years or older. The HPV and other vaccines may be given at the annual well-care visits.

In addition to completing immunizations and school annual wellness forms, it's the time to coordinate with patients and parents/caregivers on the necessary supplies and education on asthma, inhalers, and medication management. Time can be saved for both the practice and families if the physical form is scanned prior to the well-care visit. It can also be sent via the patient portal.

This visit is also a good time to address additional concerns, including drug overdose awareness. Remind parents and guardians about the dangers of having edible marijuana or other candy-like drug substances around the house and to take care not to drive while impaired. Children should be cautioned about the dangers of medications and drugs, whether found in the home or from other people.

Here's to a healthy and happy month!

Meet the Measures: Immunizations for adolescents (HPV immunizations)

The Immunizations for Adolescents measure assesses the percentage of adolescents 13 years of age who received the following vaccines on or before the 13th birthday:

- One dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine of serogroups A, C, W, Y (must be completed on or between the 11th and 13th birthdays).

- One tetanus, diphtheria toxoids, and acellular pertussis (Tdap) vaccine (must be completed on or between the 10th and 13th birthdays)
- At least two Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines with dates of services at least 146 days apart or three HPV vaccines with different dates of service on or between the 9th and 13th birthdays.

Here are some best practices to help when talking with the parents/guardians about the importance of the HPV vaccine:

- The Human Papillomavirus vaccine (HPV) can potentially prevent certain type of cancers.
- Studies have shown that immunizations before first sexual activity has started provides greater protection against HPV infection.
- More than 97% of healthy immunization recipients develop antibodies to HPV vaccine types after immunization. Immunization at an earlier age provided greater immunity against the HPV virus.
- Share a story with families of someone that has had an HPV related cancer to exemplify what we are trying to prevent. Michael Douglas and his stage IV, oral, squamous cell carcinoma may be one example to consider.
- Recommend starting the HPV immunization as early as 9 years of age. Remind the parents/guardians that the HPV immunization is safe, effective, and helps to protect kids from cancers later in life.

Starting the HPV immunization series at age 9 increases the probability of completing the series before the 13th birthday. Get your entire office team to engage and education families about the importance of getting immunizations done. Discuss the HPV and immunizations together as part of getting ready for the new school year.

The SQCN network team has been studying the HPV immunization rates for success in its participating practices. This includes reviewing, discussing, and working to increase the numbers of teen immunized against HPV as part of a performance improvement project.

Your practice and our network have roles in this strategy and can work in concert to provide the right care, at the right time, in the right place. Please [contact us](#) for help with patient education, SDOH resources, or care management needs.

Source: [NCQA/Immunizations for Adolescents \(IMA\)](#)

Upcoming Meetings

- The **Adult PCPC meeting** is August 15 from 7-8 a.m. [Link.](#)
- The **Pediatric PCPC** meeting is August 20 from 6-7 p.m. [Link.](#)
- The **SACO Primary Care Leadership** meeting is canceled this month. The next meeting is September 20 from 7-8 a.m.
- The **Practice Managers** is August 28 from 12:15-1 p.m. [Link.](#)

[2024 SCHEDULE](#)

Impact Scorecards

Avoidable ED visits (rate per 1,000) remain as our utilization metric and there are several quality metrics for adult and pediatric populations. These metrics are scored for each practice and the total score is expressed as a percentage from 30-100%. That performance score will be combined with attribution to determine distributions. The report is updated monthly so that you can track your practice's performance.

[LINK TO SCORECARD](#)

Health Equity Corner: Putting the "well" back in child and adolescent well-care visits

It's that time again when millions of children return to school. Many schedule their annual well-care visit to update immunizations or receive a sports physical. Here is the clinical to-do list:

1. **Build trust.** Children are more likely to express what is going on in their lives with someone who genuinely seems concerned about them. Taking the time to ask questions about what is going on in their life and listening to their response will build trust.
2. **Educate on nutrition.** Well-care visits are also a time to educate on

nutrition. Many food and beauty items contain toxic chemicals. Providing a list of alternate options can help reduce exposure and unwanted weight.

3. Ask the "right" questions. Open-ended questions can be vague and miss an opportunity to find out about suicidal thoughts or attempts, sexual activity, or drug use. Lead with a no judgment statement and let them know this is a safe space. Be specific and ask the same question in several different ways. It is helpful to have the parents out of the room, as many will not disclose that type of information with a parent present.

4. Address vaccine concerns. Administering immunizations is getting more difficult with the distribution of inaccurate information online. It is important to find out what the parent is concerned about and dispel myths and false information, particularly with the HPV vaccine (see "Meet the Measures" above for tips). Sharing statistics and asking about family history can help support the importance of getting it at an early age.

5. Administer immunizations. Screenings, immunizations, and talks about staying healthy save lives.

6. Promote health maintenance. By following these steps, clinicians can enhance patient care and contribute significantly to the well-being of their young patients.

7. And finally, stay informed.

HCC Coding Tips: Substance Use Disorder (SUD)

SUDs that lead to overdose is an ever-increasing international problem. Some of these disorders include—but are not limited to—opioid- and cocaine-related use/abuse with complications.

Here are some key tips to consider when coding and documenting for SUD:

- **Indicate the severity of the SUD per the *DSM-5* criteria.**
 - Mild: Presence of 2-3 criteria
 - Moderate: Presence of 4-5 criteria
 - Severe: Presence of ≥6 criteria

- **Indicate the type of SUD.**
 - **Use:** The use of psychoactive substances without harmful effects or dependency.
 - **Abuse:** The harmful/hazardous use of psychoactive substances.
 - **Dependence:** Repeated use that typically leaves the user wanting to take the drug despite the harmful effects and potential physical withdrawal.
- **Indicate the pattern of use:** Continuous, remission, relapsed
- **Current presentation:** Intoxication, withdrawal
- **Treatment plan:** Rehabilitation, maintenance therapy, referral, etc.
- **SUD is considered in remission when:**
 - Less than 3 of the *DSM-5* criteria from the checklist are met.
 - There is a state of wellness.
 - There is an abatement of signs and symptoms that characterize active addiction.

Symptoms of tolerance or withdrawal occurring in context of appropriate medical treatment with prescription (opioids, benzo, stimulant) are specifically **not counted** when diagnosing a SUD. It is not advised to code SUD for well-managed patients on chronic prescribed controlled substances, as tolerance and withdrawal do not count as criteria for diagnosis in that situation.

Pharmacy Highlights: Opioid overdose

Opioid overdose is the most common cause of accidental overdose in the United States. In Virginia, there were 2,490 drug overdose deaths and 22,398 ED visits in 2022. About 79% of overdoses are caused by fentanyl, fentanyl analogs, and tramadol.

This August 31 is International Overdose Awareness Day. Naloxone is a medication that can quickly reverse an opioid overdose. It's important for family members, caregivers, and friends to know how to recognize an overdose and

how to use naloxone in an emergency. Here are links on where your patients can find the emergency medication for free:

- [National Harm Reduction Coalition](#)
- [NEXT Distro](#)

Find more information about awareness, tips, and statistics below.

OPIOID OVERDOSE INFORMATION, TIPS & STATS



Diabetes and flu

Flu season is almost here and [people with diabetes](#) may get more serious flu complications. Be sure to give your patients with diabetes access to the flu vaccine early in the season. [Contact us](#) if you have a patient who may benefit from the no-cost diabetes self-management program.

Older adult vaccines

Remind your patients who are 50 and over of the [recommended schedule](#) that includes:

- COVID-19 vaccine
- Flu vaccine (influenza)
- Shingles vaccine (zoster)
- Tdap or Td





Children's eye health

Help keep your athletes safe. Protective eyewear is recommended for most sports. The annual well-care visit or sports exam is a great time to talk about any concerns. For more information on sports eyewear, see this [National Eye Institute link on Sports & Your Eyes](#).

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